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DEBUT OR DIE

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[READHIVE]

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CHAPTER 51

‘A prominent participant.’

Regardless of the participants finishing the filming of <Idol Inc.>, Cheongryeo was skeptical about their long-term success.

The program’s current top ranks were on the rise with the power of audition entertainment. However, the competitiveness when they came out on the actual market was another story.

‘Maybe they just do well within the program story.’

After all, there were many cases where they failed the internal competition of the agency and were overwhelmed by audition programs.

Cheongryeo was just going to continue talking about the lunch menu, but a participant suddenly came to mind and he casually mentioned him.

“Park Moondae?”

“Ah, chicken feet?”

Cheongryeo didn’t laugh as he listened to the younger member laughing.

“All his answers on the questionnaire matched mine.”

“Wow! Really? That’s amazing… Is his personality similar to yours?”

“…To some extent.”

“Huh, really?”

Cheongryeo ignored his astonished dongsaeng, and felt that it was a bit of a pity.

‘It would be nice to have one of those types on the team.’

It was clear that Park Moondae thought the survey was stupid. There were obvious signs that he took neutral answers by paying attention to the broadcast.

“Um, if he has a similar personality to hyung, he must be… cold-hearted?”

“You mean realistic, right?”

“Y-Yes.”

The type who didn’t immerse himself in other people’s circumstances and was not good at thinking unrealistically.A person whose image was more suited to a general company than being a celebrity.

In general, aspiring idol students, especially talented young children, had both the strengths and weaknesses unique to the arts and physical education field.

In a good or bad way, it meant they were less frigid.

However, the reality they faced was an adult society dominated by the logic of capitalism.

“Well, it’s good to have someone like hyung as the leader.”

“Is that so? Thank you.”

Some people might think that his face was precious as if it was made of gold, but Cheongryeo agreed with his dongsaeng.

‘It’s better for a person with a cool head to set the mood.’

Just like VTIC where he was in charge as the leader.

In that sense, Park Moondae was a pretty good candidate for the next debut group.

‘After a year’s work, your dance will improve.’

And due to his nature, if he was one of the older ones, he had no choice but to have a strong right to speak in the team even if his years of experience were short. Cheongryeo could guarantee it because he had experienced it himself.

‘Then he would be easier to work with.’

It was good for both the team and the company.

However, since VTIC renewed the contract with the company and received some shares, there was no need to pay more attention to the next male idol.

After all, he would become a competitor if he debuted.

It was enough that Cheongryeo recommended it once out of conscience.

‘If he thinks about it, he’ll call me.’

After the short conclusion, Cheongryeo drew a line on the ‘already finished schedule’ and removed it from his head. It was a busy season.

* * *

Inside the filming set of <Idol Inc.> not long after the ranking announcement ceremony began.

The format was the same. However, the number of people had drastically decreased.

Only 20 people could compete.

That alone created tension in the hall.

And there was still one factor that would cause a change in the narrow number of people.

“The leaders of the two 1st place candidate teams in the third team match, please stand up!”

It was the benefit of winning the team match. The right of survival for one person which was agreed upon by the first-place team to advance to the next round unconditionally.

Of course, our side had already reached an agreement with Gold 1. We had already submitted it during the pre-interview before the filming.

“Our <Moon Rabbit> team… has selected participant Ha Iljoon.”

However, for quite a while after Keun Sejin’s words were over, Ryu Chungwoo, the leader of the <Husky> team, remained silent.

There seemed to be a problem.

“<Husky> team, please announce the selected team member.”

The MC’s urging words sounded exciting, probably because there was a sense of the damage.

Ryu Chungwoo slowly opened his mouth.

“Our team selected participant Choi Wongil.”

“…!”

Wow, they did it till the end.

‘Is that guy surprisingly rebelling?’

To be honest, I didn’t know he would take it. Then, it meant that Choi Wongil boldly gave up the 50% free pass and transferred.

And anyway, thanks to him, things became ambiguous.

Because they had already informed the production team who they had selected before filming.

On the other hand, it seemed that the production team hadn’t confirmed the change after Choi Wongil’s hasty escape.

But now, the production team hurriedly made a meeting as though they were embarrassed, and sent a signal to the MC.

The MC looked at the production team’s sketchbook and slowly finished his words.

“There has been an unexpected situation, and in principle, if someone drops off voluntarily, that participant’s benefit naturally will disappear. However, considering the special situation of <Casting Call>, we will give the <Husky> team an additional three minutes to discuss it!”

“…All right.”

Ryu Chungwoo bowed and gathered his team members to sit down.

And I clicked my tongue.

‘…It’s over.’

Even without seeing this, that team was in first place.

‘If you pull out the screen like that and don’t give any benefit, it won’t make a good picture.’

The production team was not stupid, they couldn’t make a situation like that.

In the end, it meant that Gold 1 had to survive on his own.

‘Victory by default is out of the question.’

Looking at Gold 1’s face pretending not to be nervous, it seemed there was a subtle atmosphere over there too.

And sure enough, the first place was not the <Moon Rabbit> team.

“Congratulations! First place is… Team <Husky>!”

“Thank you.”

But the funny situation was not over.

“According to the further agreement of the <Husky> team, the participant who receives the right to survive unconditionally… It’s participant Cha Eugene!”

Those crazy guys gave the benefit to Cha Eugene.

‘It’s either one of the two possibilities.’

Either the agreement fell apart, or Cha Eugene was ridiculously hated.

Anyway, it was their business, and the <Moon Rabbit> team had a second-place atmosphere.

“It’s such a shame.”

“T-That’s right.”

“Hey, no! We’re ranked fairly!”

Gold 1 shouted and pretended to be energetic, but honestly, it wasn’t strange if he was swearing at <Husky> guys inside.

‘I already did it, too.’

The announcement of the first place in the team match ended like that.

And the real ranking announcement began.

“The 17th place is… Participant Kwon Heeseung!”

As if the atmosphere warmed up by <Casting Call> was a lie, the air tightened every time a ranking was announced.

“T-Thank you…”

Gold 2, who was called after 18th place, went up to the podium with an openly relieved expression.

‘That guy made it too.’

I didn’t know he would make it to the end. It was a pull-up.

Thus, the rankings were announced up to the 10th place without any significant change. In other words, people who could compete were stuck.

What was surprising was that Lee Sejin rose slightly.

“11th place is… Participant! Lee Sejin~ A!”

It was a good result for the blatant fight in the previous team match. Probably because he had fought with Choi Wongil, who was filmed as a villain, he received an ambiguous revision.

Next to me, Keun Sejin relaxed and applauded Lee Sejin.

“Ah, I’m envious.”

Keun Sejin murmured faintly as if he was worried about falling.

“…”

Isn’t that cheating?

In terms of spirit, he was a guy who could stand up to anyone.

It was clear that he was memorizing the chant ‘Please call me late’ in his heart.

His awareness of the camera was really professional.

“Congratulations~”

On the podium, the MC continued announcing the rankings with moderate intervals between them.

Most of the familiar participants were called and climbed onto the podium.

And Park Moondae’s name was called no later than before.

“Thank you.”

I sat in sixth place.

It was slightly lower than the last time.

‘My rank has dropped too.’

The number of votes did not decrease. My vote just hadn’t increased as much as the high inflation.

The reason for the inflation was simple.

Since they could vote as much as they spent, the more fans became aware of the negative voting, the more they bought them out of anxiety.

And this tendency inevitably got stronger the more desperate the participants looked.

‘When you’re scared, you scream more.’

In other words, the production crew had adopted a great way to squeeze their wallets.

However, compared to other top ranks who had been controversial in the past, whether in portion or rank, ‘Park Moondae’ hadn’t been particularly caught up in special circumstances recently.

‘I can’t help it.’

However, creating a controversial issue was absurd. It was not me who controlled the level of editing, it was the production team.

‘It was a pity to just pass the <Casting Call>.’

It was too bad, but it was already in the past. Anyway, since VTIC came out, it was not possible to pick out a cut centered on Park Moondae.

“Congratulations~”

“Oh, thank you.”

Keun Sejin, who rose slightly to finish in 7th place, smiled and asked for a high five. It was a very standard reaction from a fellow participant.

‘Looking at the momentum, I think this guy is going to debut.’

Except for the negative votes given during the school bullying controversy, Keun Sejin received more votes than Park Moondae.

As expected, the voters had gathered together.

I never thought good deeds would threaten the back of my head like this.

‘I was being a pushover again… ’

At that time, I had no choice because we were on the same team. Still, it was inevitable that my stomach felt a little cramped. I briefly clicked my tongue and turned my gaze to the MC.

First place was Cha Eugene.

“Wow!!”

Cha Eugene smiled excitedly and received the first place badge, then suddenly he took a serious attitude and expressed his feelings and gratitude.

“Coming out here… I learn a lot and think a lot. I will work harder and stronger in the future. Thank you so much for first place.”

His grammar was still strange, but it was a serious tone that had never been shown before. It was an aspect that could create synergy with his recent portion.

‘That’s why we won first place.’

The fact that he didn’t seem to be aiming for it meant that he was indeed the one with the highest talent here.

“Participant Cha Eugene, the No. 1 stock chosen by the shareholders! Congratulations once again~”

With moderate applause, Cha Eugene climbed up to the first-place seat and sat down.

The remaining survivors were the lowest two.

And so far, Gold 1 hadn’t been on the podium.

‘For now, he’s a candidate.’

The situation was hopeful until four candidates for 20th and 19th places appeared on the billboard and Gold 1’s face was shown. The odds were 50 percent.

And Gold 1’s name was…

“20th place! The last participant to advance to the final stage of <Re-Listed! Idol Inc.>… is Seo Taemoon!”

…not called.

Just like losing first place in the team match, half of the odds betrayed Gold 1 again.

It was a result of losing to the enemy with a 50% chance.

“I’ll go back with the pride to have made it this far. Thank you so much to the shareholders who voted for me!”

In the end, Gold 1, Ha Iljoon, finished the audition in 21st place.

“Hyung!”

“Hey, call me!”

As soon as the MC’s closing remarks were over, the drop-outs had less formal send-off than before. Since they had struggled together for months, they probably had three or four close friends.

I came to greet Gold 1 after Gold 2 and Seon Ahyeon, who were shedding tears.

The camera was running, it was quite burdensome to have a conversation after the two of them were immersed in their emotions.

Let’s shake hands in moderation for now.

“Moondae~”

However, this one also started with a hug, as if it was an emotional build-up.

‘I can’t tear him off.’

Gold 1 said calmly as I felt uncomfortable.

Words that sounded like pressing down signs of regret.

“I think you’re going to debut. Cheer up.”

“…”

I wondered if the past me who just had entered the body of ‘Park Moondae’ would believe it if he was told that in a few months, he would feel complicated due to the well-wishing remark of an aspiring idol.

‘Great.’

Instead of sighing, I returned the well-wishing remark.

“Hyung, too.”

“What?”

“I think hyung will debut soon.”

Gold 1, Ha Iljoon, released the hug and grinned.

“Right? I’m ready to thrive.”

I wonder. Will he be able to get a good result with an ambiguous final ranking in 21st place?

But I just nodded.

Surprisingly, It wasn’t an act that came from the thought of doing it properly for the camera.

“Thank you for all this time.”

“Thank you so much!”

20 participants remained and 57 were eliminated. Now all I had to do was wait for the final.

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CHAPTER 52

After all the eliminated players left the room, the remaining participants changed into training clothes and regrouped at the dorm.

Now that they had a send-off filled with tears and snot, everyone seemed to be filled with the strange sense of being the chosen ones.

‘It can’t be helped.’

They came to the finals with the support of an unspecified number of people, so it was only natural that their egos grew bloated.

If I wasn’t mentally strong enough, I would have gotten drunk in the atmosphere. They were too young.

Perhaps having gotten off work, The MC didn’t show up.

Instead, Youngrin hosted the filming.

“Re-listed! Idol Inc.>, the 20 participants who will complete the final stage. Congratulations. Shall we clap?”

“Yes!”

Clap clap clap. But what was important now was not this greeting.

‘Why isn’t there anything?’

It was definitely the time to divide the final team. But there was nothing on the set. I didn’t see a single prop waiting.

There was only an electronic display. What are you going to do?

“First of all, I’ll reveal the song you’re going to perform on the final stage.”

[Hello! This is Eagle.]

“Gasp.”

A team of composers greeted us on the display. It was a famous team that worked on several famous idol titles. The participants were excited as a few cuts of familiar music videos passed.

[The song that Eagle is giving to the participants… We’ll reveal it right away!]

‘It’s a new song.’

It wasn’t until the final that they gave a song that could be included in the debut team’s album. I could guess the size of the budget before the start of the season.

[Lalu~ lali~]

Anyway, the song was good. It wasn’t the kind of catchy songs that would quickly enter the program on the music charts and then disappear in an instant.

The problem was that I didn’t know what the guide vocalist was saying.

‘I think they just sing it as it is.’

Wait, no way?

“The title of this song is <Final>. And the lyric… There isn’t any!”

“What?”

“There are no lyrics?”

The participants reacted to Youngrin’s words. Then, one of the composition team members on the electronic display read the script with an awkward cheering pose.

[With your creativity, please complete the demo version of <Final>! Fighting!]

Youngrin spoke as if taking over from the voice on the video.

“Yes, <Final> is unfinished.”

“…!”

“Participants must write their own lyrics, complete the choreography, and attach a subtitle that suits the song. Arrangements are also possible.”

I knew it would be like this.

‘Are you haunted by self-produced concepts?’

No matter how successful the concept of self-produced idols was, I didn’t know it would be like this even in the final.

Didn’t you see all the production parts besides the <Moon Rabbit> team in the 3rd team match?

<Husky> team’s first place was Cha Eugene. Just listening to the song was not good enough.

‘The final is broadcasted live, what are you going to do?’

I listened to the last stage song playing on the electronic display with a grain of salt.

What was certain was that I should be on the same team as Kim Raebin. Lyrics and arrangement? There was nothing more to be said, I just had to catch this guy first.

‘So how do you form the team?’

Youngrin announced as if responding to my thought.

“And the team you’re going to make the stage with is… totally up to you.”

“…!!”

“Whoever you team up with, the production team won’t be involved at all. Form a team of up to seven people and proceed with the practice.”

Aigoo.

‘It’s a mess.’

If anyone did something wrong, they would become a last-minute controversial post generator.

As far as I knew, the live broadcast on the day of the final was also heavily lined up with landmines. I didn’t know the preparation for the final stage would also be filled with minefields.

“And the benefit of winning the final stage is… Ten million won.”

“Gasp!”

Strange noises broke out here and there.

Everyone seemed bewildered by the sudden prize money.

“To make the competition fair, the production team has decided to leave the final debut of participants entirely in the hands of the shareholders.”

Her voice just passed me by, ten million won… After deducting taxes, it would be around 780,000 won.

‘I want to win that, no matter what.’

By the way, I hadn’t received the refrigerator I’d gotten at the talent show yet. No way, those guys are not going to play dumb and postpone sending the prize money, right?

I listened to the rest of Youngrin’s words while calculating.

“Then, let’s form a team to make the final stage together, now… Get started!”

As soon as those words were dropped, the participants jumped into action.

“Moondae.”

“Hyung.”

The guys on both of my sides spoke straight away. Keun Sejin in seventh place and Kim Raebin in fifth place.

Keun Sejin smiled after checking out Kim Raebin.

There were no overlapping positions.

“Why don’t the three of us do it together?”

“All right.”

“Yes.”

The agreement was reached in no time. In the meantime, Seon Ahyeon, who was in second place over there, approached with hesitation.

Well, this was Seon Ahyeon… Having him on the team wouldn't hurt, so it should be fine.

"Shall we do it together?"

"H-Hn!"

Seon Ahyeon's face brightened. Other team members also nodded without much objection.

That made the four of us.

I frowned.

2nd, 5th, 6th, 7th.

'Is it too much?'

The top ranks might get criticized for only being friends among themselves.

It seemed I should add a participant I wasn't familiar with who had good skills and a relatively low ranking.

"Hyung, Cha Eugene…"

"Um."

Kim Raebin tried his luck.

I checked out Cha Eugene and Ryu Chungwoo who were already talking over there.

First place, fourth place.

Ah, this wouldn't work.

“Why don’t we just end it here?”

“Yes?”

‘Even if I want to add a low rank that I am not close with, it won’t work if they refuse it anyway.’

I neatly gave up on the additional recruitment.

Keun Sejin immediately came in as a support. This guy seemed to have already figured out the situation.

“We have to think about the significance of our stage, too~ Since it’s the last one, wouldn’t it be nice to show off more? Each of our position is already perfect!”

“…”

He couldn’t deny it. If Cha Eugene came in, we wouldn’t know what kind of distortion would appear in the editing or the portion.

Kim Raebin was silent for a moment with a troubled face and then nodded peacefully.

“You’re right.”

It was a wise decision.

‘Because it’s not about the vote, it’s the prize.’

I didn’t know the voting method yet, but it didn’t matter if it was an individual vote or an unfavorable victory. Ultimately, the portion on stage was more important.

Four people were enough.

Keun Sejin turned vigorously to the organized situation.

“Then let’s take it like this…”

“There, hyung-nim!”

At that time, someone came in after cutting off Keun Sejin.

It was Gold 2.

“Ah, can we… Can we do it together?”

Gold 2 surprisingly came to us with 11th place Lee Sejin.

‘How did you coax him?’

Gold 2 was trying not to show his nervousness, but frankly, it was obvious.

“…”

How do I refuse him in a way that won’t get me cursed at?

I glanced at Keun Sejin. He had an apologetic smile. It was clear that he was squeezing out a rejection phrase.

He must be thinking that it was bothersome since we already put together a small number of the best people.

But Gold 2 was brave. I meant that in a slightly sad way.

“Really! I am confident that I will work hard! No matter which parts I take, I can do it well without complaining!”

The picture was getting weird.

Rather, it was okay to refuse if it was Cha Eugene who came and asked to join. We could mix it with a bit of humor and split it into a rival gimmick.

But we couldn’t do that the 18th-ranked high school freshman. A majority of this team was also in the same group as him in the first team match.

‘They’ll make some editing about our distance.’

I held back my sigh.

Rather, as soon as he came here, we should have finished quickly with words like, ‘Sorry, we decided to do it with just four of us’. But no one wanted to carry the torch.

It was better to just accept it but we already rejected Cha Eugene with the portion excuse right before this. It would be strange if me or Keun Sejin, who made the remarks, wanted to accept them.

“C-Can’t we do it together…?”

Fortunately, the weakest person here declared surrender first. Seon Ahyeon opened his mouth while quietly watching.

‘Good job.’

Now, the key was to persuade Kim Raebin…

“I think it’ll be fine.”

Huh?

‘You easily accept this?’

Kim Raebin nodded unexpectedly.

I didn’t know if he reacted quickly because he had already tasted the spicy taste of editing once, or if there was another reason.

“Well, how about Moondae?”

“It’s fine.”

“Okay. Then shall we do it together?”

“Gasp! Thank you!”

Gold 2 raised both of his hands and posed for a hurray. In the back, Lee Sejin lowered his head with a stiff expression and then straightened it.

It was amazing that he could still be unfriendly.

“What do you mean thank you, let’s do well.”

Keun Sejin quickly cleared up the situation and headed for Youngrin. They exchanged a few words, and soon letters appeared on the electronic display.

[Team 1 confirmed!]

[Seon Ahyeon (2), Kim Raebin (5), Park Moondae (6), Lee Sejin B (7), Lee Sejin A (11), Kwon Heeseung (18)]

It was confirmed.

I felt a little bitter because this turned out sloppier than I thought. I didn’t want to put a concerning bomb like Lee Sejin.

But making him join us would be better than being filmed as a hater.

At that moment, Cha Eugene’s voice filled with regret echoed from behind.

“Ah, I missed it!”

“…”

I guess that team was talking about ‘Park Moondae’ being the main vocalist. Team 1 was made so quickly that the timing did not come.

“Hyung! Let’s do it together next time!”

“That would be great.”

I thought as I answered Cha Eugene, who was waving his hand among the participants.

‘This is the last one. How could there be a next time?’

Cha Eugene had a pure brain until the end.

* * *

“Hey, we made our team quickly, so our practice time has increased!”

Keun Sejin smiled and proceeded with the conversation. Slowly coming to the fourth round, it was good that we didn’t waste time with the useless process of ‘getting to know each other’.

“Once we select a leader, we can proceed immediately!”

“Oh~”

People continued to look at Keun Sejin with exclamations.They seemed to think that since he had been the leader in all team matches so far, he would do it again this time.

Keun Sejin smiled and shook his head.

“Ah, I won’t run for the leader!”

“…!?”

“What, why?”

To the shocked team members, Keun Sejin purposely blinked exaggeratedly as if embarrassed.

I wanted to poke his eyeballs.

“I want to be the main dancer!”

“…”

I didn’t know what bullshit he was saying now but those two were not positions that couldn’t be held at the same time.

‘You had both positions during the second round.’

Are you using that remark to target the main dancer? With lame comments like, ‘I give up being the leader!’.

Surprisingly, actor Lee Sejin spoke out.

“You can do both.”

“Ah~ that’s right. But this time, I’m going to try my best.”

Keun Sejin smiled and put his hands together.

“Besides, there are a lot of things to put in this time, so, well, I thought about it in the third round as well. I think someone who is talented in creating stuff should be the leader!”

At those words, I turned to Kim Raebin.

Kim Raebin looked at Keun Sejin, noticed my gaze, and opened his mouth with an exclamation ‘Ah’.

“I want to recommend Park Moondae hyung.”

“…”

That’s not it.

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CHAPTER 53

“Moondae hyung as the leader?”

“Yes.”

Kim Raebin nodded earnestly at Gold 2’s question. The dumbfounded face reminded me of the team members’ reaction during the second team match.

‘Stop it.’

I didn’t want to get any more jokes.

However, Kim Raebin continued to speak without hesitation.

“First of all, he’s calm, has a good eye, and takes good care of his surroundings.”

“Oh.”

Keun Sejin scratched his chin.

Next to him, Seon Ahyeon nodded vigorously

“T-That’s right!”

Perhaps excited by the reaction, Kim Raebin released his words in rapid-fire succession. He seemed to be influenced by his own logic.

“Most of all, I think his greatest strength as a leader is to have good judgment in heat of the moment. Judging from these aspects, I think he will

demonstrate good capabilities in situations where comprehensive creation is required.”

“…That’s true.”

Gold 2 nodded with a blank look as if swept away by the atmosphere. Lee Sejin was surprisingly quiet.

‘Did it work?’

I looked at the situation grumpily and suddenly realized that it was a good opportunity.

‘If I become the leader, wouldn’t I be able to pick out a desperate cut?’

It was the last minute anyway, so it was all or nothing.

It should be okay to try being a leader and show that I was working hard.

“I don’t mind. Is that okay with you guys?”

“O-Of course!”

The team members laughed amicably when Gold 2 was caught off guard and suddenly just answered.

I also laughed and organized the situation.

“Then I’ll try. I look forward to your kind cooperation.”

“Ooh~!”

“Congratulations~”

I got a round of applause and wore the leader’s badge. The ‘l’ sparkled on the cheap metal badge.

‘It’s not bad.’

Kim Raebin wrote the lyrics and Seon Ahyeon made the choreography, so I didn’t feel burdened.

‘I just need to be careful with Lee Sejin.’

I could only hope that the characteristic ‘I heard it’s true’ that I used and forgot a few times in the last team match would be worth its grade this time.

Oh, speaking of characteristics. I had finally leveled up.

This was thanks to the 1,000th practice points collected during the last team match.

‘I barely managed to raise my level by singing and dancing.’

I clicked my tongue and called the status window for the first time in a while.

[Name: Park Moondae (Ryu Gunwoo)]

Level: 13

Title: None

Singing: A

Dance: C+

Appearance: B+

Talent: B-

Characteristics: Infinite potential, I heard it’s true(C), I want to be the center (C), Bacchus 500 (B)

!Status abnormality: Debut or die

Remaining points: 1

‘I barely held back from wishing to have my dance filmed.’

It was hell to follow the choreography revised by Seon Ahyeon and Keun Sejin duo who had C+ abilities.

Just to be clear, my plan to save one extra point came close to being shattered because I never knew how things would turn out.

And there was one more thing left.

[Calling for fame!]

1,000,000 people remembered your existence!

: Draw Rare Characteristics ☜Click!

‘One million people.’

It was a staggering number.

I realized that the people who remembered the name, face, and characteristics of ‘Park Moondae’ had grown to an astronomical number.

Actually, I didn’t leave this draw because I wanted to. I achieved it in the middle of the ranking announcement, so I didn’t have time to pay attention to it until now.

Anyway, I would spin this] now.

As I skillfully glanced at the status window, the slot machine started to run.

And stopped in the silver space.

[Characteristic: Acquire ‘Unmoving Heart (B)’!]

The mind is not swayed by external impulses.

: Mental shock -50%

‘Not bad.’

It was a necessary characteristic in a situation where I was the leader. It would help me to not get upset. I was moderately satisfied.

But another pop-up appeared.

[You can only have three characteristics!]

[I heard it’s true (C)] ◀ Delete

[I want to be the center (C)]

[Bacchus 500 (B)]

[Unmoving heart (B) new!]

What?

‘Is this how you balance it?’

If this was a game system, letting me keep having characteristics indefinitely would be strange.

I sighed and skimmed through the list of characteristics.

First of all, ‘Infinite potential’ was not included.

‘It can’t be deleted and it seems it doesn’t count at all.’

According to the current pop-up, there were three possible characteristics. However, I had four characteristics so far, including ‘Infinite potential’, so my guess might be right.

“Hmm.”

I thought about it for a while and chose to delete it.

[Characteristic: Unmoving heart (B) has been deleted!]

It was a pity since I just got it, but it couldn’t be helped.

‘The others are still necessary.’

‘I want to be the center (C)’ was a waste to throw away because it corrected my talent stat.It had a lower grade than ‘Unmoving Heart (B)’, but it was effective.

And since I was the leader, now that I had teamed up with Seon Ahyeon again, it was dangerous to throw away ‘I heard it’s true (C)’.

In addition, I had no intention of throwing away ‘Bacchus 500 (B)’ no matter what came out. This thing was no different from the health potion in RPG.I had to carry it to the end.

‘Then all that’s left is Unmoving Heart.’

It’s a bit of a waste, but what else can I do?

In the first place, I wasn’t the emotional type, so it wasn’t a big loss.

‘It ends up like this.’

As soon as I turned off the status window, I heard excited voices around me.

“Chief Moondae! What should we do first?”

“Leader Park! Chief Moondae!”

“…”

Wow, I already got a nickname.

Throwing Unmoving Heart was the right decision but for some reason, I had a feeling that I would regret it throughout this practice.

I ignored the rising skepticism and proceeded with the meeting.

“First, let’s start with the concept.”

That was how the final practice began.

* * *

A few days later, while Park Moondae was working hard on practicing the final stage as the unexpected leader, episode 11, which included the ranking announcement ceremony, was aired outside.

Park Moondae’s fans of course enjoyed the portion of <Casting Call> where Moondae met with VTIC.

In particular, after seeing Cheongryeo openly answering in an interview, ‘All of Park Moondae’s questions and answers matched with me,’ some VTIC fans mixed in and enjoyed the broadcast.

– Meong Puppy who became shy after meeting Cheongryeo. [Video]

– Did you see Moon Puppy jump in shock when VTIC came in Our puppy, were you surprised?

– It was so cute that I commented every time Moondae was shown, but it was the same for Cheongryeo as well

┗Even the comments are similar… Sigh… The chemistry between the two is good, won't they do a variety show together later

┗Yeah, no, why are you rubbing him together with VTIC

┗I'm a fan of Cheongryeo. Just ignore it. It's low-level aggro. Moondae was so cute~

┗Yes, thank you

As the program entered the second half, fans who had already become experienced showed that they were not shaken by most of the agro.

– Who is the participant who perfectly matched our leader's personality test?

┗Park Moondae (21, main vocalist), nickname: Moon Puppy, likes chicken feet. A cute participant who always works hard [Multiple photos]

┗Oh, thank you. I'll buy stocks~

┗Thank you very much, we have a free product for the week, you see. If you can prove the purchase, the chicken gifticon event is in progress [Link]

When Park Moondae's ranking was announced, the warm atmosphere of sharing was broken.

– ?

– Did he just call the Moondae?

– 6th place

– Crazy

– It fell down

– Is this real?

With Park Moondae’s current momentum, they naturally thought he would finish in third place or higher.

Fans who were confused and denied reality for a moment soon became angry.

It was anger directed at themselves.

– That’s ridiculous, how can Moondae fall like this?

– Every stage is legendary and the influx is overflowing, but his rank dropped Sigh…

– No, the stocks themselves only have good news every time, but his rank dropped? It’s because the fans are lazy, it’s not Moondae’s fault

– What controversy does he have other than the early portion? Is it his lack of skills or his face… That’s not everything about him. You can see that he’s good at everything and care about a lot of things, he shouldn’t end up like this

– I’m already pissed off that the eager appraisers are talking bullshit I’m going crazy

Even at dawn after the broadcast, this atmosphere did not die down. Instead, it just calmed down a little.

– I can’t sleep.

-In fact, the number of stock sales increased for a while due to the reverse of Keun Sejin’s rumors but if we take that out, wouldn’t the ranking change?

– So, you’re saying Moondae is originally in 7th place?

– Ah I’m really at a loss for words

– Honestly, this stage wasn’t a stage that would make his rank drop. You would know if you like hot content

– Even though Moondae was the main vocalist, he was ranked 4th in terms of views and likes on fancams. This situation is absurd.

-Do you see what shareholders of other participants are doing? We’re the only ones who believed in stocks and just take care of ourselves

And all these opinions converged into one.

– If it continues like this, Moondae might get dropped off. Get a hold of yourself.

So the dawn just before sunrise.

Park Moondae’s fan sites were all on fire.

There was only one thing stuck in their minds.

‘I’ll show you!’

* * *

“The air outside is clear.”

It had been a while since I came out of the set. Beside me, Keun Sejin murmured in a rare gloomy voice.

‘It’s been a week.’

Due to sudden accommodation and filming set maintenance problems, participants unexpectedly got a short two-day break.

It was 10 days before the final and three days before the next broadcast.

<Idol Inc.> conducted a broadcast with surviving participants in the form of a talk show instead of the main broadcast the week before the final.

Of course, it was also a live broadcast.

It was fortunate that I had a short break before that. I was a little worried about the amount of practice, but I knew I would practice to death in three days.

“Is Moondae living in Ahyeon’s house again this time?”

“Y-Yes!”

During the break, I would be in Seon Ahyeon’s care for a while.

‘I don’t want to do anything.’

Being a leader… burned more calories than I thought.

I immediately followed Seon Ahyeon. His parents came to pick him up again.

“Hyung!”

I heard the voice I had heard every day for the past few days from behind.

“Hn, what?”

“If you don’t have a schedule for two days, do you want to go see the billboards that fans put up?”

“Um.”

I’d like to answer that I didn’t have a schedule right away. But, I was at a loss for words.

‘It’s time to go see it.’

They spent of lof money on it, so if I didn’t confirm it myself, they might feel down.

But I wanted to go alone.

However, if I refused and went alone, my relationship with Kim Raebin would worsen.

‘This isn’t some kind of dating sim game… ’

It was a bit absurd, but it couldn’t be helped.

“Okay. Let’s do it.”

“…! Yes!”

Kim Raebin nodded with an excited expression. Then he took out his smartphone and started working hard on something.

“The most effective route to see the billboards is… How about this?”

I looked at the screen that Kim Raebin was holding out.

It showed a picture with a line drawn on the subway line.

It seemed he had drawn the location of the move on the map that marked the stations where my billboard was hung.

Sure enough, the related phrase at the bottom…

[Park Moondae’s subway latest ver. (27 stations)]

“…”

27?

Only places with a large floating population were marked with circles.

‘Is this… possible?’

It wasn’t some kind of VTIC global fundraising birthday , was it possible to catch 27 stations alone?

Keun Sejin, who was looking at his smartphone next to me, hit me on the back.

“Hey, you’ve got one more billboard than Cha Eugene! Subway Ads! You are number one!”

“Oh… Congratulations, hyung.”

“…”

What the hell happened during the week of practice?

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CHAPTER 54

While I was speechless at the number of ’27 stations’, the billboard confirmation expedition steadily increased.

“Are you going? Then I’ll go, too. There are a few overlapping places here!”

“There is a ban on team spoilers, so why don’t we go with someone from the other team?”

“Cha Eugene?”

“Yes.”

“I’m fine. What about Moondae?”

“Whatever.”

“Yes!”

At that point, it quietly and quickly came to an end.

What was surprising was that Seon Ahyeon stepped out of it with a face of regret.

“W-With my parents… I decided to go on a trip.”

“Okay?”

If that is the reason, isn’t it concerning that I will be alone at Seon Ahyeon’s house once he leaves?

“Ah, then should I stay somewhere else?”

“N-No! Stay!”

Seon Ahyeon was taken aback.

“I-I’ll give you the key.”

“Um, thank you.”

I didn’t know what you believed in me to make you lend the key. When I accepted the key, Seon Ahyeon suddenly confessed.

“O-Originally, I was going to ask you to come with me…”

“…”

I didn’t know why he wanted to include Park Moondae on his family trip.

Did your parents give you permission?

“…I’m grateful for your kindness.”

“Yes.”

If it happened like this, I’d rather have an tour with Kim Raebin. I almost went on a trip with someone else’s parents.

“See you on the day of the shoot~”

Under the guidance of Keun Sejin who waved his hand, I saw Seon Ahyeon off. And as soon as Seon Ahyeon disappeared in the car, Cha Eugene appeared.

“I’m so excited!”

Cha Eugene shook his backpack with his eyes shining. I felt tired already.

‘What a day.’

Let’s have a moment of silence for my ruined holiday.

* * *

First of all, the crazy proposal to travel by public transportation with this number of people was rejected. Because we already had a track record.

“We’ll have to run away before we can even get to the station.”

“You’re right.”

Cha Eugene was disappointed but recovered quickly.

It was also fun to travel by taxi. Though, I didn’t know why.

Anyway, the first hit was at Yeouido Station, the closest to the filming set.

“Are you taking pictures?”

This somehow ended well.

It was only me and Kim Raebin who got caught at Yeouido Station, so each of us quickly took a picture and left without saying anything.

There seemed to be one or two people who recognized me when I took off my mask, but it was a weekday morning at a station with a lot of office workers, so it went without a fuss.

“Good!”

As I got into a taxi with my excited companions as if we were carrying out a secret order, I suddenly wondered.

‘…Isn’t this meaningless?’

If there is no eyewitness account, how is it different from just looking at the billboards alone?

Even if it was for confirmation, I couldn’t just post pictures on the Internet.

‘Should I leak it by acting like a witness?’

But this worry was a useless notion.

Because it was a mess from the Express Terminal Station, the next destination.

“Oooh!”

“Cha Eugene! Hey, it’s Cha Eugene!”

“Is it them? Idol Inc.?”

“They must have come to see the billboard. Heol…”

I heard all these words spoken at the same time as soon as I approached within 3M in front of the billboard at the Express Terminal Station.

Of course, we were wearing our masks.

Learning from the previous failure, everyone was wearing hats and hoodies, but I couldn’t figure out how they found out. They couldn’t even see my hair.

And a huge crowd began to gather.

It was no joke, I could see people running from the underground shopping mall toward this way.

‘This… This is a nuisance.’

It was a perfect situation for an accident to happen.

‘Let’s run.’

After roughly exchanging glances, we quickly left the station. Of course, I couldn’t take a picture.

‘Covering our faces is useless now.’

We took a taxi and took a moment to breathe, but I confirmed that another taxi was following behind our taxi.

“Are they following us?”

“The person in the passenger seat is holding a camera.”

The taxi atmosphere became gloomy after Kim Raebin’s confirmation.

The taxi driver joked, ‘What kind of fun things are you guys doing~’ then kept his mouth shut at the serious atmosphere.

‘It’s ruined.’

That was how the billboard tour failed spectacularly from the beginning.

After barely getting rid of the car that was following us, everyone understood the current situation.

“…Let’s go separately.”

“Okay.”

“Yes…”

“Let’s wear a doll mask!”

“…??”

Breaking the quiet atmosphere of agreement, Cha Eugene suddenly made a sudden proposal.

“Doll mask?”

“Yes! It’s cute and people won’t know it’s us!”

Keun Sejin was the first to react.

“Wait… Oh, there’s a rental place in Gangnam.”

“Oh!”

“The price is good too! I think we can spend 50,000-60,000 won per person?”

50,000 won was not cheap.

But it was a good idea. I sighed and added.

“That’s a good idea but let’s go see the billboards separately.”

“Yes?”

“Why?!”

At Cha Eugene’s question, Kim Raebin answered gloomily.

“That’s right, if four people wearing doll masks are walking around, it’ll get more attention…”

“Ah.”

Everyone understood immediately.

“Then let’s rent it together. Is that okay?”

“Yes!”

“Okay. Driver! We’d like to go here…”

Keun Sejin immediately changed the destination of the taxi.

Less than 20 minutes later, we arrived at a party supplies rental shop located in the corner of a commercial building.

“This one!”

As soon as we arrived, Cha Eugene immediately grabbed a doll mask and excitedly headed to the checkout counter. It looked like something similar to White Tiger.

(TL note: White Tiger = Baekho = one of the Four Symbols of the Chinese constellations.)

“That was fast.”

“Shall we quickly choose as well?”

Then, an employee approached the remaining people in front of the doll masks and spoke with sparkling eyes.

“Hey, can I get your autograph?”

“…Sure.”

After asking them not to post it on the Internet today, we lined up and signed.

It was very awkward.

“I want this.”

After the signing was over, I went to pick out a doll mask accompanied by an employee. As Keun Sejin picked a huge bear doll mask, Kim Raebin picked a rabbit mask next to him.

They obviously picked it while being conscious of the fans’ public opinion.

‘In that case, then me too.’

I grudgingly grabbed a doll mask.

The first doll mask I tried after a part-time job five years ago was heavy.

‘This time is going to be hard, too.’

The thought of walking around wearing this made me feel distant.

First of all… Shall we start with a new route?

* * *

Following the encouragement to vote, Park Moondae’s fan sites placed billboards on each public transportation to attract voting during the final.

They caught all the s, including buses and movie theaters, but due to the short preparation period, only subway station s were currently executed.

Here, it was the same for the person who preoccupied the large electric billboard near the underground shopping center of Gangnam Station.

‘It turned out well!’

The woman, who pulled out Park Moondae's cheek-poking pose at the production presentation, finally picked the billboard with that picture.

'I'm glad I saved it.'

For reference, The photo of Park Moondae wearing a hero suit for the second team match was hung on the billboard at Jamsil Station. She was going to go see it next.

'I wanted to do one more.'

Looking at Seon Ahyeon's billboard on the opposite, she swallowed her disappointment.

She wanted that position.

In fact, she saw a post a few days ago that Seon Ahyeon's fans almost rented the entire Ahyeon Station, so they installed billboards from the subway safety door to the exit.

'If that's the case, I'll let Gangnam go.'

The fundraising was enough, so it was a waste because there was still money left for her to add.

Anyway, it's done and the color came out well.'

She took a picture of the billboard with her camera once again.

Then, her friend, who went to buy coffee for a while, came up and called her with a voice full of laughter.

"Hey, look at that!"

"Huh?"

When she turned her head to the direction her friend was pointing at with her coffee straw, a person wearing a yellow puppy mask with pricked ears was waddling toward the billboard.

‘Welsh Corgi?’

Looking blankly at it, she saw a sketchbook in the Welsh Corgi’s hand.

[Park Moondae Debut]

“What’s with that!”

She burst into laughter and gave way to the Welsh Corgi. Some people around who were looking at the billboard were also laughing at the Welsh Corgi.

It seemed he came wearing a yellow dog mask to match Moondae’s nickname and his hair color.

The tall man waddling around with a doll mask looked pretty cute.

“Do you want me to take a picture of you?”

Her friend asked the Welsh Corgi, who was standing in front of the billboard. Welsh Corgi nodded and held out his phone.

‘Ah, there are so many interesting people.’

She spoke to the Welsh Corgi, unable to hide her laughter.

“Can I take a picture and upload it? It’s a good idea!”

The Welsh Corgi nodded eagerly. She quickly took a photo and uploaded it to her fan account.

[I came to check the commercial and met a fan wearing a doll mask! : D (Picture) (Picture)]

Because it was a subject that people would like, the number of shares and likes increased in an instant.

Meanwhile, the Welsh Corgi took a proof shot and got his phone back from her friend.

“Have a safe journey home~”

The Welsh Corgi nodded to her and her friend, then waddled off again.

She, too, giggled and moved to take subway line 2 with her friend. Because she was going to have lunch near Jamsil Station and check the billboard there.

She went to a nearby restaurant, ate, went to a cafe for the second time, and waited for the drink she ordered, then her friend smiled and showed her something.

“Look at this! I think it’s the Welsh Corgi fan that went to Jamsil earlier. Another photo came up.”

“Wow, that’s great. It must be hard to move around wearing that.”

She smiled and checked the photos on SNS, saying that it would be fun to see Mundae.

The Welsh Corgi diligently visited every station throughout the morning and lunch to take proof shots.

‘Did you come to Seoul to do this?’

Sometimes she saw this type of fans, so it wasn’t new to her. Although the doll mask was an interesting idea.

As she flipped through it, she saw the pictures she took earlier.

Then, she found something and her hand stopped.

The scene where her friend took a picture of the Welsh Corgi.

“…Huh?”

“What’s wrong?”

She asked her friend in a trembling voice.

“That… When you took a picture of the Welsh Corgi earlier.”

“Yes.”

“D-Did you check his phone?”

Her friend tilted her head.

“Well… It’s just a smartphone. A little old… and doesn’t have a case… Now, wait a minute.”

Her friend realized it while talking.

Without listening to her words, she checked Moondae’s PR video in a hurry.

‘This model.’

And then she checked the picture she took again.

The Welsh Corgi’s phone in her friend’s hand… It had the same shape as the one in the PR video.

She got goosebumps all over her back.

“Hey, heyheyhey, hey…”

“…Really? Really? Really?”

“No, this is, uh……”

When she and her friend stuttered, unable to complete the sentence due to the unbelievable speculation, a new notification came in on the smartphone.

Crazy Crazy Crazy Yellow Puppy Moondae took off his mask just now aaah (Shaken photo) (Photo of Moondae unmasking)]

The article was accompanied by a picture of Park Moondae’s upper body, who was smiling and sweating while taking his mask off in front of the billboard at Sinchon Station.

The picture they saw in the morning was correct.

“…”

The two sat with their mouths open until the drinks came out.

Then Americano came out.

“Enjoy your meal.”

“…”

Only then she poured ice water down her throat and howled inwardly.

‘I should’ve shaken his hands!’

She was happy to be this lucky and she felt like she was going die from happiness because of Moondae’s kindness, but at the same time, she was so sad that she wanted to throw up.

“Let’s go to the fan signing event.”

“I’ll definitely go.”

Promising to go to the fan signing, the two quietly flared up.

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CHAPTER 55

I returned the doll mask before sunset and returned to Seon Ahyeon’s house.

I felt like my whole body was steamed with moisture inside the doll mask.

‘It was hot.’

The expenses were considerable. Besides, I was tired.

But it didn’t feel bad.

‘Is it because I only heard good things?’

The reaction was amazing when I took off my mask at the end, but in fact, I thought it was more interesting when I was walking around wearing it.

It was a fresh experience to see people laughing and wanting to take pictures together or handing over Park Moondae’s printed photos or snacks.

‘Of course, I didn’t expect these kinds of photos to come out… I didn’t know.’

There was also a photo of me with photoshopped yellow animal ears.

I put the items I received, including the photos, in my luggage.I thought I’d look into it more later.

Then I immediately took a shower.

‘I think I will live.’

After I dried my body and changed clothes, I felt more refreshed.

As I sat on the bed and drank cold water, the new group chat rang endlessly.

[Keun Sejin: Wow, I saw the news. Everyone did a good job Except for Eugene!]

[Cha Eugene: ; ()]

[Raebin Kim: Why did you talk while wearing the doll mask?]

[Cha Eugene: I didn’t know…]

When I checked and looked it up, there was a video of Cha Eugene shouting thank you and getting caught at once and then running away.

‘Somehow, I’m not surprised.’

[Keun Sejin: Hey, Moondae went around 15 places? That’s amazing. He’s a Korean with determination. Let’s give him a round of applause]

[Kim Raebin: (old applauding emoticon)]

[Cha Eugene: Congratulations…]

[Keun Sejin: Moondae, I can see that 1 has disappeared, answer me]

I laughed and replied.

[Me: Yes, thank you.]

[Kim Raebin: (basic greeting emoticon)]

[Cha Eugene: Cool!]

[Keun Sejin: Don’t mention it (heart emoticon)]

I turned off the group chat filled with excessive emoticons and logged on to SNS.

‘Let’s take a closer look.’

I was thinking to check if there was any strange noise like, ‘Just practice and don’t go around during the break, don’t you have a brain?’

“Hmm.”

Fortunately, that didn’t happen. People looked happy.

I moved up the timeline a little bit.

When people noticed that four people were wearing doll masks and looking for billboards of different contestants.

At first, people seemed to think that it was a joke between fans.

– I want to do it with fellow enthusiasts

– Harmonious and cute, I hope fans don’t fight and get along like this

– Let’s all debut soon♡

However, when Cha Eugene was found out and the participants took off their masks one by one, it turned into a shocking situation.

– C C Crazy

– Gah, guys, what’s going on?

– I went to Jamsil Station yesterday Aaarg Moondae If this noona had known, noona would have camped there today…

– What’s with that bare face, is it really glowing?

– I gave a photo to Welsh Corgi Moondae Uwaaa I love you, Moondae!!! [Moondae’s photo with dog ears]

After that, there was a buzz about whether this was part of filming for <Idol Inc.>, but they became happier when a doll mask rental place posted a review with the autographs.

[They seem to have rented according to their own image. The doll mask rental place made a review (link)]

– How in the world do these crazy people think like this

– When I think about my kid looking for a doll mask and choosing a Welsh Corgi mask, it’s so cute that I want to die [I love you to death and screenshot]

– He must have been proud to find a puppy mask and pick the yellow one just because the fans called him puppy My heart aches

‘…I’m glad you enjoyed it.’

It was a bit embarrassing, but it was tolerable because people liked it so much. But I wondered why they kept calling me cute… I didn’t understand.

‘Is it a matter of my emotions?’

It was a mystery. I shrugged and lay down on the bed.

And then I realized.

‘I didn’t eat anything today.’

I forgot because I was busy running all day wearing a doll mask.

But strangely, I didn’t feel empty inside.

Should I eat something and sleep? I briefly thought so, but soon fell asleep.

It was a dreamless sleep.

Falling asleep so early in the evening, the slumber continued until noon the next day.

Well… it was a fruitful holiday.

* * *

I did light exercise for half a day and rested well.

And the next morning, at dawn.

I headed to the set to prepare for the live broadcast talk.

Seon Ahyeon, who returned from the trip at night with some walnut cookies, naturally came along with me.

By the way, the walnut cookies were delicious. It was soft because it used white kidney beans in the ingredients.

“It’s Moondae. Did you rest well?”

“Yes.”

Upon entering the waiting area in the set, Ryu Chungwoo, who arrived first, greeted me.

Seon Ahyeon was not present because he was called by the production team.

“Did you rest well?”

“Um… yes.”

Ryu Chungwoo grinned. His complexion didn’t look good.

‘Come to think of it, he’s not even a leader this time.’

I heard they made a concession, but I didn’t know what happened. I wasn’t interested.

“I saw you guys wearing doll masks. It looked fun.”

“Ah, thank you. I heard hyung also made confirmations, too.”

In case we debut together, let’s indulge him and respond like this.

Ryu Chungwoo replied with a slight hesitation.

“…I haven’t been able to lately.”

“…”

What do you want me to do?

It seemed he wanted me to ask but I didn’t think I needed to know Ryu Chungwoo’s story.

I shrugged and made a closing remark.

“You can do it once after the broadcast.”

“Um… I feel like it’ll make me lose face if I can’t make a debut.”

Ryu Chungwoo laughed haha.

‘Why does it seem like he keeps grabbing the end of the conversation?’

I cut off the conversation.

“I think hyung is going to debut.”

“Thank you, but it’s still unknown. My rank dropped, too.”

Are you talking about dropping from 1st to 4th?

‘I know that you debuted and became a leader.’

I glanced at Ryu Chungwoo bitterly, but I acknowledged that anyone who participated to this point might get anxious.

Besides, this guy… It seemed he was burnout.

‘Wait, if Ryu Chungwoo is eliminated like this, there will be a vacancy.’

I thought hopefully for a moment but soon gave up. Even if he lost his mind now, the only thing left was the final, so it wouldn’t be much of use.

I just decided to answer comfortably.

“Even if you get eliminated, wouldn’t the fans prefer you to verify the billboard?”

“Well… I don’t know if fans will still be there after I get eliminated and the program is over.”

“They even spent money on advertising, I don’t think they will suddenly disappear.”

“Huh?”

“You know, if it’s a transfer station, the unit price is at least 200 won, and if it’s a good place, it’s 10 million won.”

“I-Is that so?”

“Yes.”

I could hear Ryu Chungwoo swallowing his saliva.

‘No way, you didn’t know?’

“I have to… work hard.”

“Of course.”

I looked at Ryu Chungwoo blankly.

“Moondae!”

Just in time, Keun Sejin raised one hand and entered energetically.

‘I can use that as an excuse.’

I naturally bowed to Ryu Chungwoo and approached Keun Sejin.

And I thought about it again.

‘Then I… Even at the minimum unit price, I owe them 54 million won.’

It was an amount of money that would break my conscience unless I worked really hard.

I didn’t expect to have this kind of definite motivation besides the sudden death.

* * *

This was the subtitle of this week’s main broadcast of <Re-listed! Idol Inc.>.

<Re-listed! Idol Inc. – Performance presentation>

I didn’t know that the talk show would have a subtitle like this, but it was a pretty impressive naming sense anyway.

The content was no different from the usual audition program special.

They called in active participants, asked questions, and talked about some stories related to the episodes.

However, since it was a live broadcast, there was no magic of editing and of course, the level of questions was much lower than usual.

“Oh! 14 people like to dip their sauce! As expected, dipping the sauce is more popular!”

Therefore, for the majority of the portion, they released this kind of TMI.

‘You eat it raw.’

I thought to myself as I lowered the dipping sauce panel that I was holding.

Instead of the MC, an actor often seen on talk shows was running the broadcast.

It was amazing that even with 20 amateurs here, there was no awkward silence because his talking skill was so good.

‘Still, I think the ratings will be cut in half if this continues.’

Just as I thought so, MC spoke of new content.

“This segment is~ Random play dance!”

It was a famous content with a simple rule of running and dancing when the music came out, but 20 people rushed out and had fun in their own way.

-Come to me

Come to me

It’s so bright, Paradise by your side

“Wow!”

“I want to try it!”

Cha Eugene and several participants ran out and danced to <To the New World> by MallangDalkom.

“Oh~”

Participants of October 31 applauded with laughter as they followed the choreography from the first team match as if they were completely immersed in it.

Since only the songs arranged in the show were played, it seemed there were some demands to see the participants dancing to the choreography of other teams.

‘Not bad.’

As soon as I thought like that, a familiar melody hit my ear.

-POP! POP!

You’re my popcorn~

“Ooh?”

“Wow, this!”

“Haha!”

Participants jumped out in an instant and started dancing popcorn.

It was such an easy and famous dance that almost all 20 people came out.

It meant everyone came out except me.

“Moondae-ssi! Moondae-ssi!”

“…”

The MC excitedly called for Park Moondae.

‘I think it will be like this until I retire… ’

I trudged out and joined the participants.

Since we’re doing this, let’s dance hard.

– POP POP POP!

POP☆CON!

Thanks to the production team who played the song until the end, I put in the last pose before going back.

The guys in the front row who danced until the end went back together and chattered.

“Hey~ Moondae really has improved!”

“Genius, he’s a genius.”

“…Let’s stop.”

“Oh~? It was a compliment, though? Are you embarrassed?”

“Aren’t you too humble~?”

“…”

It was a mistake to accept Keun Sejin and Gold 2 on the same team.

In any case, the broadcast went well that way.

The 20 participants who desperately rushed to the content without being taken out continued to actively follow the MC’s remarks.

“Now, I’d like to ask you a question from our viewers.”

“Oh~”

“Wait a minute, let me pick a name…”

The MC pulled a ball out of the box prepared in the corner of the set and read the name inside.

“Participant Park Moondae!”

“…Yes.”

I didn’t know it could happen with the 1-in-20 chance probability.

I quickly raised my hand and answered.

MC brought a tablet PC under PPL from <Idol Inc.> and held it in his hand, then flipped the screen.

It seemed he was skipping the appropriate questions for broadcasting.

“Among the questions that are coming up right now… Ah, this!”

The MC touched the screen to zoom in on the question, then turned it toward the camera and read it.

“Well, the question is, ‘Moondae, is it true that you changed your name?'”

“…”

What?

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CHAPTER 56

‘Did Park Moondae change his name?’

I didn’t like the feeling of my backbone tightening.

Anyway, I shouldn’t look awkward. I immediately picked up the microphone and said.

“…I’ve always been Park Moondae since the register of my birth.”

“Hahaha!”

The MC’s reaction was good.

This was true.

‘As soon as I entered this body, I took off a copy of the resident registration, the draft, and even the family relationship certificate.’

I wasn’t stupid, that kind of thing was only natural.

I’d looked for all the factors that might cause a problem.

Park Moondae continued to live under this name, and there were no other peculiarities. Except for the high school dropout thing that he wrote down himself, he was clean.

‘He dropped out because of bullying, according to the suicide note.’

This meant that it wasn’t going to cause a problem with the debut.

But that specific ‘confirmation of name change’…Something about it bothered me.

‘I’ll have to look up the Internet as soon as I am done with this.’

“Oh~ they must have asked because your name is so unique!”

Feeling that there was nothing more to pick, the MC immediately wrapped up the question.

I waited for the filming to end, watching the other participants being asked questions.

* * *

I just found an in-depth SNS article on the Internet.

[I’m curious about what Moon Puppy had been doing, but I can’t find anything. No, maybe he’s an alien who changed his name]

‘This must have been the problem.’

It was a bit of a letdown.

Since the original account owner was a famous illustrator, it quickly became a meme in a short period of time. Although it was only within the fan community.

– (That… makes sense!)

– Since he’s serious about eating, he’s like an alien that has been sent to investigate the food culture of the Earth

– I saw dog’s ears on Moondae

It didn’t matter if people laughed while making these jokes, but the situation itself raised some doubts.

‘It’s not that I didn’t expect it to not come out at all.’

Park Moondae’s name and date of birth were written on his profile.

To be honest, I thought his high school life would be revealed during the broadcast.

At least something like, ‘I was in the same school, but he was a little weird’. I even expected words like ‘A child who dropped out of school after going around alone.’

These statements wouldn’t harm me. Rather, the fans would be relieved that I wasn’t the type to bully anyone since I was such a weakling at school.

‘Maybe because my impression has changed a lot.’

This conjecture seemed to make the most sense.

When I first came into this body, Park Moondae was skinny and had shaggy hair. In addition, a completely different person (me) came in, so the way of speaking, movement, and atmosphere would have changed.

But maybe someday a story would come out. I didn’t even use an alias.

‘I hope it comes out after the program is over.’

It would be difficult to see the smartphone until the live broadcast.

After filming the talk show, I went back to the dorm and returned the smartphone as usual.

‘Let’s just practice hard.’

Now there was only a week left until the final stage. There was no room for other thoughts.

…But even if there was no room for it, if there was a problem right away, I had no choice but to think about it.

It happened shortly after I noticed this.

* * *

It was two nights later that it happened.

While I was half dozing off and stuffing dinner into my mouth, an urgent call came from the production team.

From my experience so far, I thought I would get an interview cut. However, the atmosphere in the staff room was serious.

“Moondae-ssi.”

The writer who cast me in the karaoke room started talking in a tone that barely sounded concerned.

“On the Internet now… An article came up.”

“…Yes.”

I had a bad feeling.

The writer was even choosing her words in front of me as if she didn’t know how to say this.

I held out my hands, feeling a headache creeping in.

“May I just look at it myself?”

“Um, yes.”

The writer looked me up and down and handed me her phone.

I looked at the screen. A familiar interface appeared.

It was the community where controversy over Keun Sejin’s school bullying had been raised.

And at the top, I saw a title written in large font.

[Park Moondae’s reason for dropping out of high school: got caught stealing sanitary pads]

“…”

What kind of bullshit is this?

I was stunned by the unexpected title.

It had been a long time since I felt like my head was clogged up.

I checked the contents with a brain that didn’t work due to the shock.

It has been revealed that Park Moondae is a graduate of Incheon Public High School, so I’ll skip the explanation. I graduated from that public high school, but I’m the same age as Park Moondae. I was in class 3 with Park Moondae, and he was a gloomy weird kid. Actually, I didn’t even know his name. I just knew he was Idol Inc. Park Moondae when I see him rising now.

Yes, but don’t be relieved after reading this far ★ Park Moondae dropped out after getting caught stealing sanitary pads from a girl in the class ★

Even the girl whose sanitary pad was stolen dropped out shortly after because it turned into a strange rumor

And there are quite a lot of people who know this? It was such a mess, I wondered if there was going to be a school riot for a while But Park Moondae dropped out and ran away!

I'll verify my graduation album and school uniform in case you don't believe me. But even if I don't do this, the people who know it will keep coming out.

[Photo] [Photo] [Photo]

Below that, there were a series of top comments by netizens who self-proclaimed to graduate from Incheon Public High School and claimed to know the case.

"…"

A chill ran down my spine.

This… there was no answer.

Hitting someone or stealing money would be better than this. You stole a girl's sanitary pad because you had nothing to steal?

Even if I met that kind of person in real life, I would have thought he was a hopeless bastard, but this happened to an idol audition participant.

"Have you read everything?"

I had read it, but I had nothing to say.

Isn't Park Moondae crazy?

'Did you commit such an idiotic thing and write down in your will that you feel unfair about being bullied?'

Yes, if he didn’t steal it, he must have felt it was unfair. But right now, is there a way to prove that this bastard didn’t steal it?

“…Yes.”

I managed to answer.

The writer didn’t uselessly mention whether it was ‘real’ or not.

“You’d better think about what to do right now.”

She meant to take care of it myself or get off.

I swallowed my saliva and answered.

“…Give me a minute, I’ll think about it and tell you… later.”

“Yes, please do it quickly.”

I couldn’t even speak properly.

I went back to the dorm in a state of madness. It was still time to practice, so the dorm room was empty.

I sat down on the bed because I was afraid that if I sat down on the desk, I would smash everything on the table.

And I tried to think as calmly as possible… Fu*ck, it sounded troublesome.

I hit the bed.

There was a dull ‘bam-bam’ sound, but it didn’t relieve my anger at all.

‘Am I going to die like this?’

What am I supposed to do with this sh*t?

You had locked me up in this flawed body while pretending it wasn’t the case and patronizing me with the help of leveling up, you had pushed pressure on me to make my debut within a year; all these things do not make sense to me unless you intending to spite me.

My head hurt. I should have had that damn Unmoving Heart characteristic.

‘Now… what do I do?’

What came after anger was, ironically, a deep sense of helplessness.

There was nothing I could do. Really.

Because I didn’t know anything.

If I had a smartphone, I would have searched… No, this was crazy.

I wasn’t going to look at public opinion, so this was how it ended.

No matter how much I lived without caring what others said, I couldn’t guarantee that I would be fine after seeing an unspecified number of people mainly pouring out criticism.

Besides…

‘…Those people.’

I wonder what the people who supported Park Moondae were feeling.

They spent their time and money, and would never have imagined that they would be stabbed in the back like this.

It was even more ridiculous that I didn’t do it. It was driving me crazy.

…It was the first time since I was an orphan that I felt so overwhelmed by the situation.

“…”

Should I give up?

Shortly after that thought crossed my mind, someone creaked open the door to the dorm room.

“T-There…”

“…”

I thought I showed superhuman patience just by not telling them to go away now.

I didn’t respond and continued to sit on the bed with my head down. It felt like my brain was boiling.

“Hey, Park Moondae.”

Then, the door burst open and Keun Sejin came in.

The rumors must have circulated already. It wasn’t strange that the quick-witted guy noticed it first.

“Are you serious about that?”

I don’t know.

I thought I didn’t answer, but it seemed that I couldn’t control my mouth due to extreme stress. That bastard responded.

“Why don’t you know? Are you really dropping out because of that?”

“Because I don’t know.”

I don’t know why you’re bothering me. Since there’s only the final left anyway, isn’t it better for me to get off?

“…You know you’re talking nonsense right now, right?”

I clenched my teeth.

“I don’t remember.”

“What?”

“F*ck. I woke up trying to commit suicide and I don’t remember anything. Are you happy now?”

Thud.

The sound of Seon Ahyeon, who stood awkwardly on the side, dropping the chocolate bar he was holding was loud.

I sighed. I unnecessarily told the truth.

At least, I should consider it a relief that I didn’t talk about changing my body and returning to the past. Even if said that I could see the status window, I couldn’t take it out, so I was either a mythomaniac or a psychopath.

No, what’s the use of all that now? If I didn’t solve this problem, I wouldn’t be able to debut within a year.

“R-R-Really…”

“Yeah, really.”

It was already difficult to stay calm, but you were making me use my energy for useless conversation.

“Since you already know… Leave it alone. I’ll take care of it.”

“…If you don’t even remember, how can you sort it out?”

“Get out.”

“If you don’t know anything, it’s better to have someone to discuss it with. You don’t even have an agency.”

“…”

That was true.

“It’s honestly hard to believe, but I don’t think you’d lie about something like this. Rumors about stealing sanitary pads are even weirder…”

“T-That’s right.”

“I don’t think a quick-calculating guy like you would do such a foolish thing.”

“…!! N-No… I-I don’t mean that, uh, t-that’s why…”

Seon Ahyeon was broken. Keun Sejin ignored Seon Ahyeon.

“Yeah. It would have been different if it was posted by the victim or her acquaintance. But looking at it, that doesn’t seem to be the case.”

“…”

My head cooled down a bit. I raised my head and looked at Keun Sejin.

Keun Sejin calmly sat on the floor on the opposite side.

I didn’t know why this guy was being meddlesome.

‘Anyway, you’re saying that you’re helping me.’

Still, it was surprising that it happened right before the final. I wasn’t in a position to care about this right now.

“First of all… Let’s say you don’t remember this incident. Do you remember what happened in high school?”

“I don’t remember anything about high school. When I came to my senses, there was only a suicide note in front of me.”

There was silence for a while.

“…Did you mention anything in your suicide note?”

“There was no specific mention of the incident itself. There was an expression of unfairness, but that’s something anyone can say at any time.”

“You’re so cold-hearted even to yourself.”

Keun Sejin smiled helplessly.

I wanted to snort, but I couldn’t afford to do so.

“T-There.”

Seon Ahyeon interrupted with difficulty.

“T-Then… F-Finding the party involved and confirming it… I-Is it difficult?”

“…”

You mean the girl who dropped out.

“If we’re filming now, there’s no time or chance to find it… If I drop out, I don’t know.”

…The more I spoke, the clearer the situation became.

It seemed that the survival rate was higher if I dropped out, turned off the urgent fire, and figured out the situation accurately.

“…D-Don’t.”

“What?”

“D-Don’t quit, l-let’s wait a l-little bit.”

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CHAPTER 57

“Waiting for what?”

I sighed.

Considering that he had said with determination not to drop out and wait, Seon Ahyeon looked like was about to cry at any moment

Anyone who saw it would know that I was dropping out.

Conversely, my brain was getting colder.

‘There is a common saying… It is not something that can be solved by standing around.’

If I were an idol who already debuted, I might have the option of waiting while doing a self-reflection.

However, it was an impossible approach for an audition participant with the final just right around the corner.

Seeing a guy who people thought didn’t deserve to be successful at the audition was still holding on only added to the resentment.

It wasn’t just an audition, it was more of a suicide in this program, which was cable but currently had over 10% viewer ratings and dominated real-time search terms.

‘If I am going to fall out of the final anyway, the next best thing is to resign quickly and figure out the situation.’

For now, let’s pretend I don’t know anything with vague words like ‘health problems’.

That would have the least damage. If it was truly an unfair case as Park Moondae thought, explaining it would be easy.

And if I found out it was really this bastard’s fault… Go to the party involved and apologize…

Damn it, that girl even dropped out, there was no way she would let Park Moondae be active.

But there was no other way.

“If there is no evidence that it is not Park Moondae, waiting will only make the situation worse.”

“B-But… S-Sejin, too.”

“At that time, I found out it was photoshopped right away. I also had a smartphone.”

“…”

It was rare to be so lucky.

Seon Ahyeon bowed his head.

A brief silence fell again at the dorm. It was then.

“…Are you there?”

Once again, someone knocked on the door of the dorm.

“…”

“Yes.”

After hearing Keun Sejin’s short answer, the door opened. Kim Raebin came in.

And after that, Cha Eugene followed suit.

I didn’t know why he followed to someone else’s dorm, but if he came on purpose, he was a really tactless guy.

Kim Raebin immediately noticed that the atmosphere in the room was quite trashy.

“…Personal practice, it’s now over…”

“…”

The two of them must have missed practice.

They didn’t help much, but honestly… I was thankful.

I squeezed out my last patience.

“Go and practice.”

“…! N-No…”

“There are only a few days left, so don’t regret it.”

“…What about you?”

I answered calmly.

“I need to consult about dropping out.”

“…!!”

“N-No…”

Lastly, I would check the public opinion one more time, and If it went as expected, I would have to make up a reason for dropping out.

“Yes? Hyung, why all of a sudden…”

Kim Raebin was taken aback. It seemed this unsociable fellow still hadn’t heard the rumor.

‘I’m tired.’

I didn’t want to talk about anything else. They’d heard it all by tomorrow anyway.

I just passed Kim Rabin and headed for the door. I was thinking of meeting the writer right away.

Then, my shoulders were grabbed from both sides.

“Come on, Moondae. Take a rest first then get up and think about it.”

“T-That’s right. F-First of all… R-Rest. Rest your head.”

As the two clung to me, I was momentarily pushed back in hand-to-hand combat.

Thanks to this, I was dragged back to bed like a dog being subdued. Are these bastards crazy?

“Are you crazy?”

“Pull yourself together. It hasn’t even been 30 minutes since I confirmed your outburst. You’re going to throw away your months of hard work in 30 minutes?”

“The longer I wait, the worse the situation gets…”

“Even if you drop out now, the article won’t come out until tomorrow morning. It doesn’t change even if you’re in bed.”

Keun Sejin and Seon Ahyeon drove me back to bed.

“You have to decide everything with a clear mind so that you won’t regret it! Do you know that you’re losing it right now because you’re scared?”

“What?”

I tried to get myself out of bed and stopped. What kind of nonsense are you saying now?

“I am sane.”

“Hn. No. You’re flustered and frightened right now.”

Keun Sejin added a little.

“…I was the same before.”

“…”

“Or you would have known before I told you. There’s no difference whether you drop out now or tomorrow morning.”

“…!”

That…

Damn it. He was right. I couldn’t refute it.

‘I’m panicking.’

I sighed. I kept thinking I shouldn’t have abandoned that damn Unmoving Heart.

First of all, I lay down on the bed as these guys pushed me.

I could clearly hear Seon Ahyeon’s relief.

“What on earth is going on…”

“Come on, let’s get out.”

I heard Keun Sejin driving Kim Raebin and Cha Eugene out of the room. Seon Ahyeon followed him and said to me, swallowing his saliva.

“R-Rest.”

Screech.

And the door was closed very carefully.

‘…Even if they go out, their beds are here.’

Well, whether they came in awkwardly after three hours or slept in the practice room, they would take care of it themselves. I wasn’t in a situation where I could afford to care that much.

I closed my eyes and crossed my arms.

And I tried to look at Park Moondae’s case objectively… how could I suddenly be able to do that? I would suffer sudden death and real social death.

‘Status window.’

When I called the unchanged status window, only one thing caught my eye.

[!Status abnormality: Debut or die]

“Why are you doing this to me?”

Why me of all people?

Why Park Moondae?

It was grossly annoying that I knew nothing about the situation and had no way to find out.

Of course, I didn’t think I would suddenly think of a good move until morning.

Things were not going to get better all of a sudden.

‘It’s foolish to wish for good luck.’

Although astonishingly bad things could come into life without warning, the opposite was, of course, extremely rare.

Compare the odds of winning a lottery with the odds of getting into a car accident on the road. The latter was overwhelmingly more likely to happen.

Look at me. A supernatural miracle changed my whole life, but I had never expected that my life was already ruined.

“…Huh.”

Damn it. It just made me more anxious. If I was going to do it anyway, I wanted to drop out right away.

‘…But let’s skip tonight.’

I couldn’t expect anything.

I sighed and stretched out my arms, purely out of consideration for those guys' sincerity.

My thoughts turned chaotic. The more I calculated what should be reasonable.

'There's no answer anywhere… '

I fell asleep just like that.

* * *

Pop!

The noise brought me back to my sense.

'…The sound of wood breaking?'

When I turned my eyes half awake, I saw Seon Ahyeon storming through the door.

"M-Moondae."

Seon Ahyeon's face was red.

'Someone else has broken down.'

If someone other than me had broken down, I hoped I could hide away thanks to that.

Seon Ahyeon suddenly shoved something into my face.

It was a smartphone with a screen turned on.

"L-Look at this…!"

The light from the screen stung my eyes. I frowned and grabbed the smartphone.

‘Where did you get it?’

Holding an item that shouldn’t be brought into the filming set, I read the screen reluctantly.

“…!”

A miracle had happened.

[(2nd place!) Park Moondae, a cast member of Idol Inc who is recently involved in a controversy. (632)]

: I’m still very afraid to write this in public. But I don’t want to see innocent people suffer anymore, so I write.

It was true that I dropped out after my sanitary pad was stolen.

But it wasn’t Park Moondae who stole the sanitary pad.

…

The article began to explain the situation at the time in great detail.

The writer had continuously been bullied by her bad classmates since the beginning of the semester for no special reason.

The bullying that started with gossip gradually escalated, and in the end, it got to the point where it became unbearable. However, due to family circumstances, she had no choice but to endure it even if it was difficult to cope.

Then her sanitary pad was stolen.

It seemed that they tried to double the fun by putting the blame on Park Moondae who had no close friends in the class.

[I didn’t want to live]

It was not specifically mentioned between the lines, but it seemed that this ridicule was sexual harassment. The writer was completely mentally shattered under extreme stress and was absent without notice for 10 days.

And during this period, Park Moondae dropped out.

Although the writer herself was a victim, she tried to contact Park Moondae after dropping out because it bothered her that Park Moondae was falsely accused.

However, it was said that Park Moondae’s answer to her apology text was this.

[‘You didn’t do anything wrong, so of course, you don’t have to apologize, and it’s fine because I was going to drop out anyway. But if you’re having a hard time and want to accuse the perpetrators who harassed you, I’ll help.’ That was his long answer.]

The writer was taking antidepressants at the time and was unable to proceed with the accusation because just going near school made her hyperventilate.

So, she ended the conversation with Park Moondae, but It was said that even after she got away from the incident to some extent, she continued to care and tried to contact him.

However, it turned out his number didn’t exist anymore.

‘…Park Moondae canceled his cell phone.’

[When I saw Moondae on the audition program, I couldn’t recognize him because his style and impression had changed so much. It was only after

this controversy that I realized this Park Moondae was my friend.

He was quiet when he was in school, but he wasn't strange or a nuisance. After dropping out, I realized that he was a thoughtful and kind friend.

I hope Moondae doesn't get hurt by this incident]

The writing was based on the recording of the main character in high school against the perpetrators and it ended with an exhilarating sentence that she would proceed with the lawsuit. There were several verification photos attached below.

In the latest comments, people who denied reality were either being beaten up, deleting their comments, or running away.

And switching opinions occupied top comments.

– Crazy, no wonder it felt weird, Moondae looks so clean there's no way he would do such a shady thing

– Prepare the settlement money, the self-proclaimed alumni who spread rumors about Park Moondae and the writer without knowing the full story~

– Ah… Thank you for writing this… Thank you so much… Moondae, you worked hard

"…"

I felt nauseous.

'It wasn't Park Moondae.'

The person directly involved even showed up and proved it through verification.

A day after the incident at that.

“…”

“N-Never mind!”

Seon Ahyeon started to talk about something, but it was hard to hear him properly.

Because my head was spinning.

‘This… Is it possible?’

I didn’t do anything, but the situation suddenly got better?

Can this just be solved like this?

Rather than relief and joy, I felt strange.

It was strange that something like this could happen in life.

I thought I had learned from experience that if my life changed when I hadn’t done anything, it usually wasn’t a good thing.

I never thought I’d come into someone’s body and experience the opposite.

“Hey!!”

The door was kicked open and a stampede of people rushed in. I saw the faces of the team members, starting with Keun Sejin.

‘Come to think of it… I am the leader.’

We were not that close so I thought it was strange. Since the leader was in a state of Schrödinger’s resignation, they must have felt uncertain to change the practice.

It seemed these guys had been thinking a lot last night.

“Hey! What did I say? I told you to wait, didn’t I?”

Keun Sejin looked at Seon Ahyeon and grasped the situation, then shouted loudly. It seemed he already knew everything.

“…Right.”

I meekly agreed.

“Thank you.”

“…!”

If it weren’t for these guys, I would have already quit last night, taken out my luggage, and regretted it in the morning.

“Thanks to you, I can continue with the broadcast.”

I laughed.

Seon Ahyeon was happy, repeating ‘No’ and ‘I am glad’. Keun Sejin grinned.

“If you’re grateful, buy me a cow.”

“…Let’s pretend this never happened.”

“Hey!”

I didn’t have money.

Only then I was relieved, listening to Keun Sejin’s grumbling and congratulatory words of the team members.

‘Now I can practice quietly until the final.’

“Thank you for bringing this. How did you get it?”

“I-I asked for it!”

Seon Ahyeon took his phone with a bright smile. Now I hope I didn’t see anything until the finals.

But I didn’t know things would start to turn out even stranger the moment I took my eyes off the smartphone.

The first flame was posted by Gold 1.

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CHAPTER 58

On the Internet, rumors of Park Moondae were quickly corrected.

Thanks to the explanation of the person directly involved, few people unnecessarily criticized it.

However, only the persistent sarcasm of the haters, who were unable to take out their anger on ‘Park Moondae who deserved getting cursed’, remained.

-I don’t know if the impression has changed, but it looks like he got plastic surgery, blargh, the delusional loser acted as if he had become something Fantastic ass-kicking

– On the show, he pretended to be tough and acted ‘my way’ but he’s just a loser. That or being the thief of the sanitary pad isn’t at all a lie?

– Yes, it doesn’t change the fact that Park Moondae is a dropout. I don’t suck adults who can’t even graduate from high school

After all, the final was just right around the corner, and fans were enraged to see people rushing to damage his image in any way possible.

– It’s the end of humanity…

– Moondae doesn’t do anything wrong, so why do psychopaths keep sticking around?

– He has to debut no matter what… I don’t think I can live if Moondae can’t debut, it’s so unfair

-I’m getting all the PDFs. I’m just waiting for Moondae’s agency to be established

It was at this time that Gold 1’s, Ha Iljoon’s article was posted.

As soon as Ha Iljoon was eliminated, he opened an SNS and posted his impression of participating in the program and his practice diary.

[The final round is coming up! I will watch it live too!]

+) I’m rooting for October 31’s hyungs and dongsaengs. Especially #Moondae! During the grade evaluation, he practiced without sleeping for a week, so he was a legend among us Fighting!

#IdolInc. #WatchLive #HaIljoon #Traveler

After seeing Moondae recovering from being beaten up, Ha Iljoon mentioned him partly because he felt sorry and partly to make it hot news, but the content was the problem.

No one knew that Park Moondae stayed up all night during the grade evaluation.

At the same time, because Park Moondae was mentioned a lot on the internet, this SNS post turned into a great aggro.

– Go to sleep for real;;;;

– He must be crazy, a week my ass…

– He must be exaggerating

– I didn’t sleep properly and worked hard~ isn’t that what it is?

– He said it was a legend among trainees Do you have to exaggerate like that?

In the end, Ha Iljoon replied to various questions on SNS.

– I'm always rooting for you, Ha Iljoon! About the participant Park Moondae you mentioned, did he really not sleep for a week?

┗Ha Iljoon: Yes! We were in the same room. Moondae always came in briefly at night, ate snacks, and left~ I think he started sleeping right before the grade evaluation? He's taking care of his condition

And Park Moondae's fans fell into a state of shock.

– Our child is that serious?

– Hey what should I do… I thought Moondae's skills were improving because he was a genius But he didn't sleep? Why didn't it come out on the show?

– In his portions, they always gave him characters like, 'Why are you good at this when you only came out for fun?' Sigh…

– If you think about it, it is impossible for a person without passion to come up with an idea every time and grow

– I would have clenched my teeth ah I'm really glad I know now, thank you, Iljoon

After the shock disappeared, each community burned with a sense of mission to make Park Moondae debut. Many fans posted sales articles and became more enthusiastic about promoting stocks.

And some fans had begun to look into third-party accusations against the haters through their own lawyers.

– I can't stand it anymore.

– Let's set the mood by posting that we're going to file a complaint!

Originally, no matter how fast they progressed, they couldn’t produce results in the final, so they would start once the agency was formed, but some fans who were on fire couldn’t stand the bullshit about Park Moondae any longer.

So starting with the purpose of warning the haters, they discovered something unexpected.

– What’s this?

While identifying the haters, they found their group chat.

And it was revealed that some of them broke into Park Moondae’s house.

They were taken to the police without particular results but were soon released, and there was only one thing they could take in the process.

It was a draft of Park Moondae’s resident registration.

Of course, Park Moondae had already cut up the draft and put it in the recycling box.

He would never have dreamed that crazy people would break into his apartment and pick up the shredded rough draft even if they had to search through the trash can.

Based on the draft, they dug up the fact that Moondae was a dropout along with the school he attended and posted it on the Internet.

The fact that Moondae was an orphan was not disclosed ‘because there’s room for sympathy’, but in their group chat, there were a lot of insults that made fun of it.

– These crazy things are real…

– How can people live like this?

Fans who were proceeding with the accusation were angry, but naturally, they tried to proceed quietly without disclosing this fact.

But, as was always the case when the majority dealt with this sort of thing, it leaked.

[(No.1!) Orphan Park Moondae (1373)]

: It is said that sasaengs broke into Park Moondae's apartment and found a draft of his resident registration. Both parents are dead. No siblings.

[Screenshooted photo of the group chat] [Photo of the taped draft]

Of course, there were many people who criticized the post, but the number of views did not lie.

Shortly thereafter, articles began to appear.

[Participant of <Idol Inc.> Park Moondae overcame the sadness of losing his family and challenged the audition.]

Although the articles were taken down a few hours later after facing enormous criticism, it couldn't help what was already known.

But this led to an unexpected effect.

Anyone who insulted Park Moondae right now would become trash.

In addition, the tragic past of audition participants had become a natural selling point for those who were sensitive.

– How could it have been easy for a young person to take on such a challenge when his parents were gone? Park Moondae, I hope you do your best and win

– It’s so touching how he can look so determined on the show, even his parents in heaven would be proud

– Participant Park Moondae, cheer up~ You’re such a good singer, fighting!

Of course, just like every other information, when this atmosphere calmed down, the fact that Park Moondae was an orphan could be used as a tool of ridicule.

But not now.

Thanks to this, Park Moondae faced the final match while receiving enormous support and sympathy from public opinion. It was thanks to the fact that he got the ‘desperate image and narrative’ that he wanted.

* * *

What’s going on here?

On the Internet, which I looked into for the first time in a long time, crazy things were happening one after another.

‘It’s all exposed.’

The four trespassers seemed to be out of their minds, but I didn’t know they’d go through the trash can and put the torn paper together.

And I never thought it would be leaked and made the entire nation know that I was an orphan.

I was curious about why things turned out like this, but more than that, I felt cool-headed.

‘Well… I don’t have a family. I don’t care if others know.’

I already said this when I was cast for the audition program, but it was known too late because the production team hadn’t even mentioned it.

The problem was that the timing when this was revealed was intertwined and the momentum was unusual.

‘I’m going to debut…?’

No, not just debuting… Can I become number 1?

“…”

This… wasn’t good. Debut was good, but not in first place.

‘There are landmines there.’

I let go of the computer first, feeling like I was breaking into cold sweats.

I borrowed it as an excuse to edit stage lyrics and searched it up. but I didn’t expect to find out so much.

“Hyung, are you okay?”

Kim Raebin, who was browsing next to me, grasped the situation and asked. I guess he was fine with me turning out to be an orphan.

“Yeah. I already said it in the interview, but it didn’t come out.”

I nodded. Kim Raebin looked relieved. then his eyes flashed as if he suddenly thought of an idea.

“Hyung, then why don’t you use this momentum to reveal your memory loss?”

“What?”

This guy also heard the situation on the morning when the affair was being sorted out, so he knew about the memory loss. But apart from that, what kind of nonsense is that?

“If it’s revealed to the current public opinion, malicious comments about hyung will be blocked at its roots! And obviously, the votes will increase…”

“No.”

“Yes?”

If I got more votes and won first place, I would receive a minefield as a prize.

I couldn’t say that, so I just made an excuse.

“There’s no evidence. It’ll only make the atmosphere weird.”

“Ah, if you post the written diagnosis…”

“I don’t have something like that.”

“…You lost your memory, but you didn’t go to the hospital…?”

“My body is fine, and I don’t have money for that.”

Crack. With a face that turned into stone, Kim Raebin murmured quietly.

“Yes…”

It’s fine if you know.

Kim Raebin and I came out of the computer room. The camera immediately followed.

“Did you find the words properly?”

“Yeah, it’s the right meaning.”

Small applause erupted in the practice room when I said that there was no correction.Even though they clearly knew that I went there for the purpose of secretly looking into the Internet, they acted like that because they were mindful of the broadcasting.

“Now, tomorrow is the final… Leader-nim, can you say something?”

“Ooh!”

“Let’s take turns.”

I hurriedly interrupted. The giggling team members cleared their throats and started talking about their own impressions.

They looked happy.

Gold 2, who was almost eliminated, unexpectedly hadn’t given up. Perhaps the fact that the number of debuts hadn’t been announced yet gave him hope.

There was only one person on the team who looked sullen.

‘Lee Sejin.’

Lee Sejin, the former child actor.

He followed along with the practice, but the reaction and the portion of the broadcast were not good.

Still, he didn’t protest much in the team practice. He was just not very sociable and looked like he didn’t want to do this.

‘If wish I could get someone else.’

Because it looked like I was going to debut, I sat down measuring who I was going to debut with. I sighed and threw away my thoughts.

‘Let’s just take care of myself.’

“Hn! Lastly, Leader Park Moondae hyung-nim~ Please say something.”

“…Let’s show everything we’ve prepared so that we won’t have any regrets.”

“Oh~”

They responded well to the last comment even though it was a cliche remark. I shrugged and sat on the floor of the practice room.

Unexpectedly, the tension went up.

‘It will be over tomorrow.’

A nearly guaranteed chance to delete the status anomaly.

“Then, let’s practice again!”

The final was just around the corner.

* * *

The last filming of <Re-listed! Idol Inc.> was held at the concert hall of a famous university.

Since it was broadcasted live, the hall, which accommodated nearly 3,000 spectators to boost the excitement, was already filled with sticky heat.

Thousands of people were waiting for the broadcast to begin, each holding a sign or a slogan for the participants they were rooting for.

MCs and judges entered one after another and settled down. In response to the cheers from the audience, several judges gave light greetings in return.

And at the time of the broadcast.

The broadcast started without delay.

“<Re-listed! Inc.!> Thank you to everyone who has been with us on the long journey of the last 12 episodes!”

In the huge concert hall where the lights were turned off, Youngrin’s voice rang everywhere

“What’s left is one decision to form a group! Shareholders, have you made up your mind?”

Screams of ‘Yes!’ echoed here and there. And it was mixed with painful ‘no’.

“Then let me introduce the participants… Do you have their stocks?”

Kyaaa!!

Aaagh!!!

Lights came on on the stage with overflowing cheers and screams.

In the midst of the lights soaring in all directions, participants ride on stage equipment to come up on the stage.

“Invest now!”

That was how episode 13 began.

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CHAPTER 59

The participants' first stage was a new theme song.

Since the season was endlessly successful, a second theme song was put in hastily to match the assortment.

'I think I've heard it somewhere before.'

Park Moondae hoped that it was because he had heard this song in the future. Or else it would be plagiarism.

In any case, the audience's response was tremendous even though they didn't know the song. It was fun just to see the participants moving in real life.

Of course, the reaction of viewers watching on the screen was different.

– ? What song is it

– Why do you sing <Just Me>? You got a weird one

– Guys, let's debut

– Whatever the song is, Seon Ahyeon is great, it's an undeniable fact

– Eugene, be the center forever

– I'm so nervous that my heart feels like it's going to jump out

– Let's debut and be happier

Comments calling out the participants and cheering for them quickly passed by, flipped through, and updated so fast that it was almost unreadable.

“Huft.”

“I’m sweating.”

The participants who came down from the stage in front of thousands of people for the first time were excited and out of breath.

‘I don’t even know what I did.’

Park Moondae, who focused all his attention on not making mistakes because he learned it in a hurry at the last minute, twitched his eyebrows.

There seemed to be a lot of people, but they almost looked like a hologram due to the distance from the stage. Because it didn’t feel real.

And before the participants could come to their senses and the tension settle in their bodies, they were busy running around changing their costumes to match the time.

In the meantime, an MC appeared on the stage and led the show.

“Ah, what a great first stage!”

Since it was a live broadcast that would last over 3 hours, each part was hosted by a different person to reduce fatigue as much as possible.

“There are still many stages left to prepare! Guys, please stay tuned!”

The MC, who had hosted several audition programs, skillfully ad-libbed and dragged the time until the VCR came up.

“The team stage prepared by the participants for this final, in what order was it decided?”

Soon, a light-hearted video of the participants deciding the order through a mini-game was shown.

‘I couldn’t sleep because they filmed it at midnight.’

Park Moondae, who heard the sound from below the stage, recalled the situation at that time.

They chose primitive methods similar to cockfighting, so naturally, Ryu Chungwoo won a complete victory.

‘Should I say it’s a predestined outcome?’

What was surprising was that Seon Ahyeon made a good save. Thanks to him remaining right before Ryu Chungwoo, Park Moondae’s team secured the second priority on deciding the order.

Of course, it was not easy to choose the remaining order. The production team put the order from the last place and decided it like that.

It was a method that always appeared when survival shows wanted to be a little cruel.

Of course, the participants who were already forsaken skillfully escaped the trap. They reacted exaggeratedly and laughed, adjusting the atmosphere.

[Park Chanjoo: H-Huh?]

[Lee Sejin (Keun) : Aigoo~]

Park Moondae heard the sound of Keun Sejin deciding the order with a laugh echoed from above.

Thanks to it being decided at the last minute, he could also hear people on the other teams making strange noises about the unwanted orders.

“Wow, that’s scary.”

Just in time, Keun Sejin, who was moving the microphone to his costume next to Park Moondae, heard the sound and stuck out his tongue.

Although he was on the rise, it was not at the level of having his debut confirmed, so he was more nervous before the team match stage.

Keun Sejin’s hands were shaking, which was rare. Park Moondae clicked his tongue.

“I heard Kim Raebin has cheongshimhwan.”

(TL note: cheongshimhwan is a pill formulated with thirty-odd herbs including bezoars, ginseng, and Chinese yam root, used to treat various symptoms such as numb limbs and fit of apoplexy, epilepsy, etc. in traditional Korean medicine. Sumber: Wiki.)

“It’s fine~ I’ve never eaten it before.”

Keun Sejin waved it off and behind him, other team members dressed in their costumes ran.

“Team Park is going up~”

The staff shouted and ran to the side. Due to the need for staff both above and below the stage, the number was insufficient and gaps were created here and there.

“We’re going too, right?”

The moment the participants tried to follow suit, Seon Ahyeon raised his hand.

“W-Wait, F-Fighting… Can’t we do it?”

“Shall we?”

Park Moondae quietly held out his hand.

The team members quickly put their hands on it. Lee Sejin also reluctantly held out his hand.

“Fighting!”

The broadcast-free drill ended shortly.

“I want to say something, but we don’t have time, so let’s run~”

Laughing at Keun Sejin’s antics, the team members ran hard to the hallway.

And at the same time, in the concert hall.

After the VCR ended without showing the final sequence, The MC finally led the way to the next stage.

“We introduce the first team performance that was decided after a fierce battle…”

Instead of the VCR, the participants’ profiles appeared on the screen.

[Seon Ahyeon (2), Kim Raebin (5), Park Moondae (6), Lee Sejin B (7), Lee Sejin A (11), Kwon Heeseung (18)]

“Team <Challenger> is the first to take the stage!”

The profile disappeared, and the image of the participants high-fiving their team name attached to number 1 appeared on the screen.

– ???

– What, why are you already coming out

– Guys? Guys?

– Guys, why the opening

Fans who were confused thinking of the general competition program soon realized the situation.

– Fools, it’s better to be sent out first.

They didn’t wait until the performance was over to vote, they were already voting, so it was unconditionally advantageous to go first.

That is, only if you’re confident you’ll do well!

In an instant, audience reactions changed.

– That’s right. Coming out early is the answer

– Ah I already knew it, you guys didn’t know?

– Kya, they’re smart

– The kids are smart, I guess I’ll just have to trust them^^

– I already believe in them!

Besides, squashing the start was a fairly courageous choice anyway.

People watched the stage preparation process with high expectations.

[Team members: Thank you for the food~]

Participants sitting inside the PPL franchise cafe and talking over drinks were first broadcasted.

– Moondae took a strawberry shake… I want to nom-nom his cheeks, so cute

└Reported. (Reason: Perversion)

└That’s too much, It was Moondae who did wrong

└I got the PPT, please reveal yourself

└Crazy people

The tension in the comments was also eased briefly on the screen without tension.

Participants were talking softly in the video.

[Park Moondae: First of all, is there a concept you want to do?]

[Kwon Heeseung: That! I want to do something I haven’t done before!]

[Lee Sejin (Keun): Me too!]

[Seon Ahyeon: Me too!]

[Park Moondae: Um… Okay.]

A caption <Teacher Park of Rabbit class> passed by.

-

– The kids are all gentle, so it’s comfortable to watch

└What about Lee Sejin? Lee Sejin? Lee Sejin? Lee Sejin?

└Don’t start with the martyr, he sent Choi Wongil away

└Don’t go there, you hypocrite bastard

-The problem is that the children are gentle, but the viewers are not

Of course, the reason why they looked more gentle on screen was because they were filming again for PPL after the concept had already been decided.

[Kim Raebin: I would like a concept that goes well with the title <Final>.]

[Lee Sejin (Keun): Wow, that’s good, too!]

[Lee Sejin (Actor): So what kind of concept would suit it?]

After that, there was a moment of silence. The caption <Team members lost in thought> came out.

It was Park Moondae who broke the silence.

[Park Moondae: Among the images of ‘last’, ‘the last minute’…How about bringing out that feeling?]

[Lee Sejin (Keun): Ah, there’s only one left. That kind of feeling?]

[Park Moondae: Hn, but not too heavy. It’s better if the viewers can enjoy it without being too into it.]

Then Seon Ahyeon raised his hand. By the way, Seon Ahyeon’s stuttering symptoms finally stopped being implemented in the subtitles after the production team got cursed at for several episodes.

[Seon Ahyeon: Then… How about something like ‘■■’?]

Exclamation marks appeared on the participants’ heads on the screen.

[Kim Raebin: I want to do it…!]

[Lee Sejin (Keun): Oh, me too! I think it’s going to be fun.]

[Kwon Heeseung: That sounds good?]

Even Lee Sejin, who nodded, appeared on the show.

[Park Moondae: Then our theme is… ‘■■’, it is.]

Wow! The screen was switched to the smiling faces of the participants who clapped their hands with exclamations.

And the theme keyword was never mentioned again.

There were only a few cuts of the participants practicing and being praised while recording in the video.

[Eagle (Composer): Your voice is great!]

[Seon Ahyeon: Thank you…]

Seon Ahyeon’s ears turned red, and he bowed down and went back to his seat in a daze; Park Moondae’s part after his turn was given an okay at once.

The composers smiled at each other and asked Park Moondae.

[Eagle (Composer): Can you sing it again from beginning to end?]

[Park Moondae: Yes, I’ll try.]

Of course, it didn’t show him singing it again from the beginning, and interview cuts with composers were inserted.

[Eagle (Composer): I love them all. This team is really good. The arrangement of the song also feels like, ‘Oh~ It’s good?’]

[Eagle (Composer): There is almost nothing to fix. If they just do it like this (I think they will do well.)]

And it was also crossed with heartwarming recording scenes of other team members.

Because it was the final, no strange cuts were forced on them, so there was no malice in the editing.

However, it was impossible to guess the theme because only the non-characteristic parts of the lyrics were extracted as if they were ghosts.

Thanks to this, viewers were rolling around wondering about the word that was processed as ‘Beep–’.

– What is it

– What is it let me know

– Show me what you showed them…!

– Ugh, I’m curious. I need to see the stage

– What kind of innovative suggestion did they come up with that it had to be edited out?

– I think they cut it to hide the amount of preparation for the stage. I’m getting mad

– It would be funny if it turned out to be nothing

While the viewers were talking, the <Challenger> team, who had decided on the main dancer without much conflict, practiced the choreography endlessly, and the VCR was quickly over.

Along with the phrase <Please check out their performance now!>.

– ?

– Is that it?

– The stage just starts like this?

– The stage is coming out

When the viewers were a little flustered by the screen that ended blandly, the main screen that had returned to the concert hall was capturing the backstage screen.

The black screen crackled, blue and red glitches popped out, and white text appeared.

[Challenger]

: A challenger

: A person who tries to beat a former winner in a game, fight, or sports event.

After a while, the screen went off with a sharp mechanical sound.

And the theme melody of the song began to fill the concert hall.

Transformed to 8-bit.

Beep- beep- beep- ting!

The blatant electronic sound started as a melody and gradually developed into harmony.

Just like how the classic game evolved into a modern console game, the melody quickly became three-dimensional.

And the moment the theme melody turned around, the backstage screen opened.

Swoosh!

Participants walked out of the black stage with blue and red lasers.

As they settled down, the 8-bit melody changed and faded into a small accompaniment.

“…”

The audience also reflexively stopped cheering and kept their mouths shut.

The figures on the stage slowly formed a formation.

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CHAPTER 60

Over the dark silhouettes of the participants on stage, the audience caught a glimpse of some features of modern combat uniforms.

It was the outline of a bulletproof vest or harness.

‘Gasp.’

The moment excited audiences screamed inside, a sudden electronic sound rang in the concert hall again.

It was a modulated, androgynous voice.

[Looking for a match…]

[Successful navigation.]

[Checking the location.]

[Thirteenth round. We’re going in…]

All kinds of classical game buttons made up a new melody to match the voice.

BBi BBi- Ding dong! BBibibibibiBBi, BBi, BBi——!

Participants on the stage moved their bodies to match the sound.

The unnatural popping movement reminded them of some kind of doll or robot.

And it froze in an instant.

Thump.

When the comfort stopped at the end of the short motion, the lights turned on.

– Hold it in your hand, VICTORY

I am the one who makes it come true

A clean human voice broke through the modulated accompaniment.

Seon Ahyeon, who made a typical shot pose under the light, smiled at the end of the verse.

“Aagh!!”

In an instant, a burst of cheers filled the concert hall.

The participants began to move brilliantly as if they were responding to the shouts.

– Stages are always thrilling

I feel like my heart will explode

Kwon Heeseung sang after receiving a verse from Keun Sejin who appeared sweeping the floor.

– My WEAPON in my hand

I never miss it, you know

Every time the vocalist hit the center, complex movements were added in between, and the rigid movements similar to classical game characters

disappeared.

Due to the synergy with the costume, it felt like choosing a character to play in the character window of the recent games.

– Full of adrenaline

The soaring POWER flew away

Last SHOT!

– Drink in your excitement

I shuddered and lost my senses

Last ROUND!

The voice of Kim Raebin, who was rarely in charge of vocals, jumped over the microphone.

The choreography, in which the dancers shoot in a slightly unique way by pulling their arms in formation, was structured as if they were made to follow the dance.

And the chorus.

Park Moondae took the high note on a rising scale.

– Shoot and blow Last Match-!

I’m the one who laughs at the highlights

The VICTORY you held!

I gave it to you. You’ll like it, too

And the beat, which had risen like crazy after the chorus, was temporarily dropped.

Boom!

The theme melody flowed again in the heavy-sounding bass.

On stage, they began to stamp their feet in a triangular formation.

– Hold it in your hand, VICTORY

I am the one who makes it come true

CHALLENGER that you can choose

I’m right here, it’s me

The choreography that matched the heavy beat was laid out on the stage by powerfully moving the bodies.

The strength and weakness were distinguished enough to feel strange pressure in each movement of the body.

Every time they shook their heads and set angles, the audience watched the stage with their mouths open.

It was the same for viewers.

The comment window stopped for a while when the stage began and eventually was plastered with short words such as ‘crazy’ ‘ ’ and ‘wow’.

Despite the horrible camera work, the quality of the stage was palpable.

And as they entered the second verse, a new formation appeared.

– Yes the expectations are always so blissful

My heart is about to stop

The figures on the stage moved to their own parts first, forming a formation each on their own and moving as if they were leading other team members.

It was brutally difficult to do it live, but it looked fantastic.

In the bridge, after Kim Raebin exchanged short but elaborate raps with Lee Sejin's vocals, the chorus appeared again.

Bang!

Here again, the iconic shooting choreography appeared to prevent possible fatigue.

And again, the drop that brought out the demo version of the melody and tone that viewers had heard every time on the show.

– Hold it in your hand, VICTORY

I am the one who makes it come true

– CHALLENGER you can choose

I'm right here, it's me

This time, Seon Ahyeon came forward and danced the choreography. Flashy footwork went back and forth on the heavy beat.

Overall, this carefully composed stage increased concentration by pleasing the ears and the eyes.

Thanks to this, when the stage was over, the viewers were plastered with question marks, saying that it was over so quickly.

[Take this crown.]

[You’re welcome!]

The end of the stage. With a narration similar to the electronic sound at the beginning, the participants who stretched and bent their necks walked toward the backstage waving their hands.

The eight-beat melody sounded as if it would break.

BBi- BBi- BBibibibibiBBi, BBi——-!

Lights burst out from behind the stage, and their silhouettes slowly faded away.

Usually, choreography ended with a pose. This composition was similar to having an adventure.

But thanks to this unusual ending, they were like characters who had fun playing a game and then disappeared on stage.

“Uaaaah!”

The viewers were very excited.

After a little bit of time had passed, it wasn’t until the end of the inserted mid- that coherent comments began to appear.

-

– These cruel guys, this is the first time I’ve heard of this

– They hit me in the opening like this?

– It reminded me of when I watched the Rabbit, but it was postponed in the broadcast

– No kidding, it’s going to be hard to beat

– Wow, that was really fuc*ing cool, my jaw almost dropped

– My gums are all dry from splitting my mouth open

– It was a game concept Park Moondae and Seon Ahyeon are smart

– Honestly, don’t you think it was the best idol Inc. performance ever?

– I’m tearing up. Seon Ahyeon is already an idol, there is no objection to this. Don’t be late, everyone, buy the stocks

┗Go to the fan site~

┗It’s the last time, so just let’s watch it. Seon Ahyeon will debut anyway

– First of all, I think four members of this team will debut; what about the next team…

And as viewers expected, the stage of the next team was flat.

The main portion of this team, which was composed of relatively low ranks, was about competing in good faith and strengthening teamwork.

And like the previous team, this team also tried to take advantage of the keyword ‘Final’.

However, the lyrics and choreography, which focused on effort, passion, and urgency, lacked sophistication and became burdensome.

This comparison was more prominent because the previous team mixed humor and fantasy to form the stage.

– You’re working hard

– They catch my eyes

– Boring

– I think everyone is cute and nice~

The stage of the second team ended with a rather dull response.

And in this loose atmosphere, the stage of the last team was revealed.

The preparation process was equally mediocre, but it added a bit more to Ryu Chungwoo's overcoming his slump.

In reality, it wasn't known whether he had overcome his slump. However, in the broadcast, he received the role of leader that he had been refusing to do in the middle, and it came out as if he performed excellently.

– Hn, I understand, you want to take a video of Ryu Chungwoo?

– Yeah, I don't want to miss the military exemption

– Ryu Chungwoo is okay, but it's a bit bad

– Muggles' votes will be swept away~

The reaction from the hardcore viewers was rather lukewarm. Because it wasn't just a couple of days that Ryu Chungwoo got good portions.

Park Moondae didn't know what kind of swearing Ryu Chungwoo would have gotten if he wasn't a former national athlete, but in any case, nothing that crossed the line happened.

And the stage.

– Cha Eugene is going crazy.

– He can't be stopped!

– The master of the stage! Its incarnation!

– Only ad-lib comes out

– The bastard is good

– Hm, is he going to win first place

Cha Eugene tore up the stage again.

In fact, since he was the type of person who didn’t care much about the combination with others, it happened not because his presence made other people’s part look good.

The stage just looked great because Cha Eugene was shining.

It could be seen as a talent optimized for solo or competition programs.

The viewers chatted happily.

– Ah, it was fun.

– It was fun because the first and the last performance were good

– What’s left now?

Youngrin, who was in charge of hosting again, had an important announcement left.

“How was the <Final> team match prepared by the participants? Yes. It seems you enjoyed watching it… Now, then, it’s time for the big announcement.”

Youngrin pointed to the screen with her hand.

“Right away, we’re announcing the number of the debut members!”

* * *

After finishing the stage, the participants came downstairs to prepare for the final stage.

A pop-up of successful stages came up for the first time in a long time, but of course, I wasn't in a situation to look into it.

Because you never know when your face will be broadcast live.

In case there was any announcement on stage, there were cameras following each team participant to capture their reaction.

And just in time, they were announcing the number of people from above.

"How many is it do you think?"

"You?"

"I… ten people?"

Keun Sejin shrugged. The answer seemed to be slightly mixed with hope. Kim Raebin, who had just finished getting his makeup fixed next to him, intervened seriously.

"I think it will be an odd number. Usually, considering the formation of an idol group, people tend to prefer odd numbers."

"It makes sense."

That… It wasn't like that.

I clicked my tongue inwardly and turned my head. Seon Ayeon, who had just finished praying, met my gaze.

"How many do you think there are?"

“W-Well… M-Maybe… 7 people?”

“Seven?”

“Isn’t that too little?”

People around me apparently overheard it, so they interrupted and scolded him. It seemed they did that because they were nervous, although they pretended they weren’t.

Seon Ahyeon shrank but didn’t withdraw his opinion.

‘His personality has changed.’

I shrugged my shoulders.

“I think 7 people are the most likely. I wish there are more people.”

“Y-Yes!”

Seon Ahyeon nodded.

As I heard Cha Eugene muttering something like ‘I like even numbers’ next to me, the screams of the audience above echoed all the way down.

“What’s going on?”

It sounded almost like a vibration.

While the participants were confused, Youngrin’s voice on the microphone was heard loudly down here.

“This time, <Re-listed! Idol Inc.> The average number of people to debut selected by the shareholders. is… There are 6.47 people!”

The participants turned stiff.

“As a result of correcting the number through rounding… The final number of debut members is 6!”

And again, the place above became noisy with screams and curses.

“What did she just say?”

“6.4…, what?”

Behind the bewildered voices of the participants, I sighed.

‘This is the last episode’s aggro.’

The number of debuting members selected by people had been completely averaged and discarded.

The number of members who would debut could only be voted once and could not be modified.

Thanks to this, at the beginning of the program’s success, people voted for ‘the number of ideal idol group members in the mind’ without thinking.

By a narrow margin, five people were the most chosen.

However, the series was a huge success, and this was the result of the production team’s cheap tearful show to increase the number of people.

In the Internet community where the scale was large but aggressive tendencies were gathered, even the case of terrorizing one person as a joke was included in the sample,

-If you’re going to do it in an idiotic way like this, you should have said it a long time ago

– 6.47 so 6 people? 6 people? You guys are crazy

I shook my head, recalling the predictable response on the Internet.

‘Let’s prepare our hearts.’

Now that the final stage was over, it was the final ranking announcement ceremony.

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CHAPTER 61

As predicted by Park Moondae, everyone, from viewers to the audience, fell into a state of confusion as a result of the new concept of ‘6.47 people on average’.

Some audience members even posted messages on their SNS with their smartphones.

– People booed and the atmosphere suddenly turned cold. Idol Inc is really amazing until the end

– Where did you get the crazy idea of averaging it?

– Rather, just keep it neat and make it 5 people. 6.47 people

– Why did the production crew abandon the 0.47? Let’s accept the 7th place as a guest member

└ this, tbh

However, after the turmoil passed, the response was surprisingly not blindly negative.

It was because they could tell that the production team was working hard, so they became somewhat solemn.

– Well, they didn’t fabricate it.

– The production team would have wanted to make it 9 members.

– Those guys are conscientious in weird places… Even if they pull aggro, they don’t manipulate…

– Yes, if I have to choose between 5 and 6, then it’s 6

People managed to accept the situation. Of course, there were still a lot of people crying, saying that the number was too small.

– You should’ve blocked one vote for each person in the first place, Idol Inc bastards

And around that time, a new VCR began to come out as if it were timed.

[Hello?]

[Yay!]

It was a video of participants in pastel linen outfits waving and laughing at the camera.

They were walking among dark constructions. Light shimmered through the constructions.

In an instant, the atmosphere on the hall and on the Internet subsided.

– What’s this?

– When did you take it

– What video is it?

Participants grabbed the camera and took turns saying how they felt about the last broadcast. And ran somewhere.

[Thank you for always supporting us!]

[I love you~]

Because it looked like a typical touching VCR, viewers responded courteously. Audiences watching the VCR also cheered whenever the participants they were rooting for came out.

And the last participant left was Park Moondae.

Park Moondae awkwardly looked at the camera and just smiled.

[Thank you. I will definitely debut.]

It was an unequivocal statement.

Park Moondae also ran out of the camera screen and disappeared after leaving those short words.

Of course, in the communities filled with Park Moondae’s fans, comments flooded.

– Aigoo Moondae…

– Moondae has to debut

– Invest in Moondae who is well-prepared with both mental and technical skills… If you vote today, you can invest 100 won for 5 years…

– The one with dead parents, is it really him?

└ It’s him

└Hii, Your Honor, I didn’t say anything

└Aside from his family history, he’s great at everything, just try one bite

└ Actually, I already voted, he was really good

└Oh thanks

In order to attract more votes, fans continued to operate the business, enduring their anger at people who reacted by bringing up family matters.

In the meantime, all the participants had disappeared, and on the empty black screen, the acoustic version of <Just Me> grew dimly in the background.

Viewers were caught in a strange afterglow.

– It feels like it’s really the end

– It has a proper ending vibe

– It seems more so because of the BGM

– Can’t all 20 of them debut

– Wouldn’t it be worth trying with 20 people? The production team should make a re-voting for the number of debut members

And the angle of the video was turned.

It showed the direction the participants ran to.

Following the rotating camera, participants were seen climbing up on the left.

– ?!

– Heol

– No way

Before they knew it, the broadcast transmission screen was converted to the concert hall. Participants were seen coming up to the stage.

What looked like a video was actually a real-time transmission.

– Ah…

–

Then, the participants picked up their microphones and started singing.

An arranged acoustic version of <Just Me>.

-

– No, guys, don’t go

– Do Idol Inc forever

└Are you cursing them? But seriously, do it

└Let’s just go on stage and be all gooey every week Don’t get dropped out

– How can I send them off when I am so attached to them

Participants laughed and sang their parts with sincerity.

However, even before the first verse was over, a number of participants began to sob.

Of course, Park Moondae calmly played his part well. The ad-lib in the second half of the second verse was neat and easy to listen to.

-You sing really well.

– The fanatics are going crazy for a reason

– It’s not too late to become a fan, right?

└It’s not too late, isn’t he the winner? You don’t have to use up your emotions, just watch the last episode and free-load on their debut

-I have decided to dig Park Moondae now. I like his face, too

There were some exceptions, but the stage of the participants filled with sad arrangements made the audience sniffle.

It ended with a close-up of Lee Sejin’s crying face.

– He’s handsome

└Out of the 13 episodes, I think today is his best performance

– An actor of confidence

– Guys, you’ve been through a lot

– I hope everyone does well.

The participants who came down from the stage struggled, unable to get out of the afterglow.

Just as the stylists who were doing the makeup for the sniffling participants were getting annoyed, they heard the sound of MC introducing a new VCR above.

‘Ah, it’s that.’

Park Moondae guessed the contents of the video without much excitement. It was family content that could never be missed in the last episode of the audition.

Of course, Park Moondae had no family, so he just idled away and moved on.

‘They must have put in a lot of crying scenes.’

He recalled for a moment how Kim Raebin had cried while watching his grandmother’s video letter, his eyes were so swollen that they didn’t look sharp anymore.

Since most of the participants had cried, he thought picking the cuts would have been easy.

By the way, a few cuts of Park Moondae were taken where he calmly patted the backs of the participants.

He never thought that it made people feel comfortable.

“…It’s all over now.”

“…?”

An unexpected person spoke to Park Moondae.

‘What’s with him.’

It was Lee Sejin, the former child actor.

“Well… the program will be over soon.”

“You’re debuting, so it’s not over for you, is that what you mean?”

‘Why is this bastard suddenly picking a fight?’

Because he had a lot of thoughts at this time, Park Moondae just ignored his words without answering back.

“…It must be nice.”

Lee Sejin murmured, then went to the corner and fell into a depressed state.

“…”

Park Moondae decided not to react. If there was anyone who could care about others right before the final ranking was announced, they were just pushovers.

Participants, who had encouraged each other at the beginning of the live broadcast, had lost their sensibility after the last stage was over and were now turning stiff with extreme tension.

It was at this time that the staff called them again.

“Move to Area B! Go!”

The participants moved in a hurry with stiff faces.

The long final ranking announcement was waiting for them.

* * *

My shoulders ached from fatigue.

‘If I didn’t have the characteristic of reducing fatigue, I would have perished.’

It was difficult to turn my head or change my posture.

It was quite a lot of pressure that thousands of people were staring this way from down there.

‘They’re closer than when I was on stage.’

At least, the audience was closer than during the team match stage, which was the closest it had ever been.

If I rolled my eyes just a little, I could make eye contact with the audience below the stage.

A slogan was also swaying right below.

<Moon Puppy is debuting today>

The words written in Gungseoche style were very grim.

(TL notes: Gungseoche/Gungche = a Korean font used by court ladies since the mid-Joseon Dynasty to write Hangul more quickly and flexibly.)

‘I think I should wave my hands at least.’

But I couldn’t do that in this tense atmosphere.

“Sure enough, who is the participant who will take the 6th place of honor…”

It was because the MC had been dragging the progress for 15 minutes with several lines, including that one.

It was amazing that 20 minutes had passed since it started, but not a single person had been announced.

‘Looking at the number of votes, it’s understandable.’

I heard that there were more than a million votes, so it wasn’t strange that they were still counting.

The MC didn’t get the production crew’s signal until about three more minutes later.

“<Re-listed! Idol Inc.> the final stock ranking combining the investment from the Internet and live broadcasts, 6th place! Announced now!”

I could feel the participants’ bodies stiffening around me.

“He’s a participant who has received attention for his leadership and outstanding skills.”

The faces of the corresponding participants were shown dizzyingly on the electronic display.

‘…But why am I there?’

Ryu Chungwoo and Keun Sejin were understandable.

I tried not to look ridiculous.

However, unlike the other two, I looked like I had no expectations in my eyes, and when my face was captured, several people from below laughed despite this atmosphere.

“Congratulations, Lee Sejin… B!”

Keun Sejin opened his eyes wide, and when B was added, he burst out laughing and bent down.

“Haha…!”

Countless handshakes and congratulations poured out to Keun Sejin from the participants.

I gave a light high-five to Keun Sejin, who came out after receiving all the congratulations.

“Ah… Thank you so much, really. I tried to get rid of my expectations.”

Keun Sejin expressed his feelings about joining the debut group with a heated face, and after showing off something similar to aegyo to his fans, he went up to the podium.

‘You’re really debuting.’

It seemed he was on the rise.

‘Better him than someone I don’t know.’

I calmly waited for the next ranking announcement.

…And after waiting for more than 15 minutes, the next ranking was announced.

“5th place is…!… Ryu Chungwoo!”

It was a selection that was completely expected.

On the contrary, I thought the ranking had fallen a little, but he showed tears for the first time in the program as if he really hadn’t expected it.

‘It’s fine to be a normal person.’

I applauded from the bottom of my heart this time as well.

And next, fourth place.

“Kim Raebin! Congratulations!”

Kim Raebin was so nervous that he couldn’t even receive the congratulations properly and staggered to the podium.

Then he said his impressions one after another with clear pronunciation.

…But honestly, it sounded more like statements than impressions. It was because he recited what he was good at and what he was improving.

"…So the skill I've been developing lately is vocal. I will pay more attention to my communication skills in the future so that I can play my role as the member of the group in any situation with a more accomplished appearance."

The only thing that sounded like actual impressions was the last two sentences.

"…Once again, I would like to thank the shareholders for investing in me. and Grandma and Grandpa. I love you."

Then, he bravely removed his mouth from the microphone.

'…Shouldn't you say I love you to the fans as well?'

Kim Raebin looked at the MC with a regretful expression, perhaps realizing it only after returning the microphone, but the ship had already sailed.

'…But he's a very useful guy.'

I was moderately convinced.

The next announcement was third place.

Isn't it time to be called now, I had hope, but… That didn't happen.

"Third place is… Seon Ahyeon! Congratulations!"

On the electronic display that had dragged it on between Cha Eugene and Seon Ahyeon for a long time, Seon Ahyeon's face floated.

Seon Ahyeon's face, which had been white, quickly turned heated.

“T-Thank you…”

Surprisingly, Seon Ahyeon received congratulations without crying. Thanks to this, I didn’t intend to hug him, but the other guys did, so I followed their example.

“I-I am a really lacking person. T-The shareholders who trusted me and supported me… To my friends, really,… Thank you so much. M-More… I’ll be a person that you’ll be more proud of. Thank… you.”

Seon Ahyeon returned the microphone and cried his eyes out as he climbed up.

It felt strange to see the guy who couldn’t make his debut in the future eventually made it.

Well… It seemed to be a good thing.

‘Because Seon Ahyeon is a good guy.’

So now all that’s left is…

“It’s getting more and more heated, the last ranking ceremony of <Re-listed! Idol Inc.>! Now, the long-awaited 1st place announcement is just around the corner!”

‘It ends up like this.’

I held back my sigh.

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CHAPTER 62

Only the announcement for the first and second place was left.

I didn’t worry whether ‘Park Moondae’ would be eliminated like this.

‘There are no other candidates.’

Among the remaining people, no one was worth getting first and second place.

Ah, the guy who won third place at the last ranking announcement was spotted with his girlfriend, so public sentiment plummeted.

I feel a little bad, but… Isn’t it his own fault for meeting his girlfriend every time he took a break from filming while he was still participating in an idol audition?

“We’re revealing the first-place candidates now!”

The MC shouted some hints into the microphone. I rested my throat which turned sore due to the long procession.

And after a little bit of delay just like the previous rankings, the candidates were announced.

“Cha Eugene!”

Cha Eugene smiled and came forward. The people below cheered as if it was natural.

“And the other candidate…”

Let’s get ready to go

“Participant Park Moondae!”

As expected.

I came forward while receiving formal congratulations from some of the participants I wasn’t close with.

“Hyung, congratulations.”

At least Gold 2 seemed sincere, but I could see that he was forcibly pretending to be strong, perhaps realizing that he was about to be eliminated.

I just patted him on the back a few times and went up to the podium.

Cha Eugene, who was already climbing up, reached out his hand.

“Let’s shake hands!”

He looked very excited. I hoped he could keep this momentum and take it to first place.

I didn’t say much and accepted the handshake. The atmosphere of the concert hall temporarily became friendly.

‘Is my debut confirmed with this?’

I checked to see if there was a change in the status window, but there was only the ‘Successful stage’ pop-up that appeared earlier.

“The two of you, what do you think when you see the opposing candidate competing for first place?”

Cha Eugene immediately picked up the microphone.

“It’s really cool!”

“Haha! That’s a very clear answer~”

The MC laughed and asked fishing questions to create tension.

“Do you think you’ll win first place today?”

“I don’t know. But getting first place would be nice!”

Cha Eugene raised his thumb.

He sounded at ease enough to make the viewers feel fond of him but not to the extent that would make people resent him for joking around in the final.

“I see~ Now, let’s hear from participant Park Moondae. How do you feel when you see him?

I picked up the microphone.

“He’s such a good friend… I can’t believe I was mentioned together with this friend.”

“It was a very humble statement~ But, the first place… How about it, do you see a possibility?”

I knew you’d ask me this question somehow.

I took a break from answering as if I were thinking about it. Then I shook my head and replied.

“…It seems difficult… Um, to be honest, second place is also higher than my goal, so I’m just grateful.”

I didn’t know why, but when I answered ‘It seems difficult’ a small laugh broke out among the audience below the stage.

‘Did I sound too sincere?’

“Ah, it’s not too bad to come out in 2nd place? Won’t you regret it?”

“…Yes, of course, I’d appreciate it if I win.”

“Oh~ I see. Ladies and gentlemen, it was the resolution of participant Park Moondae.”

‘Tough guy.’

The MC barely stopped asking questions before getting back to it again.

The popularity, ratings, and reactions of <Re-listed! Idol Inc.>, and the (self-proclaimed) best treatment we would receive when we debuted, were broadcasted again.

And after a long wait, right before the announcement.

“The long-awaited first place is…… It will be revealed after the commercial!”

‘I knew this would happen.’

Originally, the candidates were supposed to be nervous and breaking down, well, they had to show such a dramatic reaction, but because the candidates were me and Cha Eugene, only applause and laughter came out

Instead, moans of resentment and several curses came out from under the stage.

‘I think they just threw out curses.’

I was almost certain that I just heard swear words popping out from behind the slogan ‘Moon Puppy’.

“Hyung! Debut! Do a lot of fun things with me!”

“…Great.”

As soon as the sign of the commercial break appeared, Cha Eugene started talking to me. He was completely excited, anyone who saw it would have thought he had already debuted and entered the dorm.

‘Are you really not interested in winning first place?’

Even so, saying that the first-place reward was an ‘amazing reward!’ was just to roughly survive.

If you didn’t have a desire for honor, it wouldn’t be weird if you were like, ‘I don’t know~ I just debut~’

However, if you knew what the first-place reward was, you wold be scared.

As I said before, the reward was actually a penalty.

In fact, since Cha Eugene was originally ranked first and he was also ranked first at the previous ranking announcement, I knew that he had a higher chance of winning.

But don’t people have this thing called premonition?

Looking at the Internet response I saw yesterday, I couldn’t help but feel anxious that ‘Park Moondae’ would win first place.

‘…I don’t know. Then I’ll just get cursed at.’

I gave up thinking. It was good enough that I could avoid sudden death.

After accepting a few words from Cha Eugene, the live broadcast resumed.

“The long-awaited first-place announcement, <Re-listed! Idol Inc>!”

The MC repeated what he had said earlier one more time. I could almost memorize it by heart.

‘He’s saying it slowly one at a time.’

To be honest, why are you taking so long when both of us are already getting on with it?

‘I think everyone has changed the channel.’

Fortunately, the MC finally said the name.

The long-awaited first place is…

“…Park Moondae!”

Although it wasn’t the name I had expected.

‘…It ends up like this.’

I got first place.

I lowered my head to hide my face in case it would show, but I realized an unexpected fact. It felt… good.

I didn’t care about the first-place penalty; once I heard that I had won, the adrenaline strangely rushed to the top of my head.

The taste of achievement was thrilling.

I almost laughed out loud.

‘This is stronger than when I got into college.’

Thanks to this, I was able to express my feelings right away without hiding my face.

“Congratulations~!”

Cha Eugene loyally gave a lot of hugs.

‘It’s American style.’

I gave back a short hug and picked up the microphone.

Looking at the concert hall from the same angle as the MC, some of the production crew under the forepart looked at me with an expression that seemed to be saying, ‘Aren’t you going to cry?’.

‘Yes. I am not.’

I just laughed.

Well, to be honest, half of it was thanks to luck and the status window… Anyway, I had parts in it too.

“Participant Park Moondae, your feeling! Please tell us how you feel.”

“Yes.”

I paused for a while, then I just spoke honestly.

Is it because I was suddenly drunk with adrenaline? There were no calculations in my head, and the words seemed to come out of my spinal cord.

“Honestly, my goal was to debut. I really wanted to debut, and I had to… So I didn’t even think about winning first place. I didn’t even expect it. I think my debut was already too good for me.”

I caught my breath.

“But… it feels nice to win.”

Cheers and light laughter broke out everywhere.

It was to the point that my next words ‘Honestly, I didn’t know this would happen’ were difficult to hear. The MC received a signal from the production team that ‘It’s still taking time’ and asked me again.

“Is there anyone you want to thank through this event?”

I was going to say it anyway.

“Well… I can’t think of anyone to mention in particular. Just, thank you to the people who invested in ‘Park Moondae’.”

A scream broke out under the stage, stopped for a moment, and then slowly continued.

“I wish I could give you something in return… Um, no matter how much you spend on me, I’ll try my best to make your spending produce the highest efficiency within the same price range. Thank you.”

I bowed my head at the end of my speech. Amidst cheers and applause, I could hear some sniffles.

Even the person holding the slogan ‘Moon Puppy’ seemed to have given too much strength to their hand because of the sobbing; the slogan was almost squashed and looked similar to ‘Nudannae’.

‘Just because of these words?’

I was a little embarrassed, but it was a relief that they liked it.

It tingled me a little to see people rejoicing with me even though it was not their business.

‘Not bad.’

At this rate, it didn’t matter if I got the first-place penalty.

As I made up my mind, the MC was conducting an interview with Cha Eugene, who came out second place.

Cha Eugene laughed and expressed his feelings to his mother in English, then waved eagerly to the audience.

He looked like he was openly enjoying himself, I could see why people took videos of him. He was the type that didn’t give people unnecessary stress or emotional exhaustion.

“Thank you~”

Cha Eugene cheerfully finished his speech. The production team sent him a sign to join the debut group next to the podium.

After Cha Eugene left running excitedly, the MC looked back at me.

The background music that created tension started playing.

“Now it’s time to make a choice.”

It had come.

I stood upright and put my hands together.

“A huge reward for the winner of first place, here it is! Let me show you. Participant Park Moondae!”

“Yes.”

“What kind of reward do you want?”

“…Well.”

I wanted to get 100 million won.

“I don’t know… A quick debut?”

“Ah~ that’s important!”

The MC spread his hand.

“Now, show us the reward!”

Then, the intro video appeared on the large electronic display in the front and the electronic display next to it, and soon a message appeared.

[Prize money 50 million won!]

“…!?”

Why is the prize money showing up there?

“Yes! Participant Park Moondae immediately receives 50 million won as the first-place reward!” You can claim it as soon as this live broadcast is over!”

This couldn’t be happening.

Even in the midst of confusion, my head diligently drew out the actual amount. 39 million won.

Of course… It was good to receive it.

However, there was never such a thing as getting 30 million won like this either.

“Or! There is another option too!”

Following the MC’s words, a new message appeared on the electronic display.

[Recruit a new member!]

“With the authority of the first-place winner, Park Moondae can nominate one of the 14 participants who came up to the final ranking announcement as a team member to debut with!”

‘Here it is.’

This damn option finally popped up.

The first place’s ultimate reward to select one of the finalists to join the debut group!

Penalty disguised as a reward!

It had become even more vicious.

‘You’re asking me to choose between the prize money and the second option…!’

How can I pick the prize in this situation?!

If I chose the prize money here, I would be turning the remaining 14 people into enemies, so of course, I had no choice but to choose the new recruitment option!

I could already tell how I would get cursed at.

– 50 million won is a big amount of money, but it’s not as big as someone else’s life.

– You’re going to make a lot of money when you debut anyway You really like money~ I can see his future in a few years

-I didn’t know you’d pick the prize money after seeing the kids suffer together… His image seems to be breaking down

Perhaps no one would have chosen the prize money, no matter who it was.

I was sure the production crew knew that and did this.

Putting some drama in the last episode of the program to torture the winner really sounded just like those guys who put negative votes as an official rule.

‘It’s pissing me off.’

Should I grab the prize money and get cursed at?

“Participant Park Moondae?”

“…Yes.”

I barely answered late.

All kinds of deafening screams were ringing out from the audience seats.

People standing below the stage also were also giving out names and screaming, but my head didn’t turn.

“Have you made up your mind?”

“…Yes.”

It was no good dragging it out too long. I opened my mouth.

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CHAPTER 63

"…I will recruit a new team member."

"Ah!! Participant Park Moondae's choice is out!"

At MC's shout, the prize money disappeared from the electronic display and the words <Recruit a new member!> were fully enlarged.

The audience cheering and the judges clapping in joy were shown on the other display screen.

I almost clenched my teeth.

'Thirty-nine million won… '

It flew away into the air.

Still, it was an inevitable choice in the long run.

Having one more participant meant that the number of fans who liked the group would also increase. And it was usually multiplied, not just added. The amount of money I could make also varied.

It was an investment that could earn me more than 5000 won in the long run.

The problem was what happened next.

"Then who is the last member chosen by participant Park Moondae?"

The rest of the participants were nervous again on the screen.

“The participant I choose is…”

No matter who I chose, it was the perfect chance to arouse resentment from the fans of the eliminated participants.

So I avoided it.

“The 7th place participant will be chosen by the shareholders.”

“Ah!”

The whispers grew bigger. Most seemed convinced or relieved.

‘…Even the production team is delighted.’

It was a little annoying.

“Participant Park Moondae left the choice to the shareholders!”

The MC glanced at the prompter and eagerly led to the proceeding, and soon the candidates for 7th place appeared on the display.

And the guy who made it…

“Congratulations, Lee Sejin!”

I almost choked.

‘How could he suddenly rise like that?’

Perhaps because of his child actor’s activities, he was highly recognized by the public, so it seemed he had benefited from those who secretly voted for the last episode.

‘…It can’t be helped.’

The water was already spilled. I made way for Lee Sejin, who staggered up to the podium.

“…Thank you.”

Lee Sejin barely managed to express his feelings, and after a few words, he bowed his head. It was enough for fans to cover it up by stating that he was out of his mind due to the unexpected situation.

The MC guided Lee Sejin to join the seats for those who had passed. Lee Sejin brushed past me and murmured softly.

“…Thank you.”

I just nodded. You must have wanted to join.

‘I want to go there, too.’

It felt like my legs were going to cramp.

How long are you going to keep me standing?

However, the MC continued the process with me standing next to him.

“Now there’s only one left! The group name of the <Re-listed! Idol Inc.> participants who will debut”

It was followed by an obvious explanation that they collected the opinions of shareholders on the Internet.

Then a dazzling logo appeared on the electronic display.

An upper case ‘T’ and a triangle that did not touch the upper side were skillfully combined, and brilliant glitter effects bounced off the sides and the top before settling into small diamond marks.

– Your investment verified.

– Your idol, your star

-TEST + STAR

– <TeSTAR>

“The group name selected by the shareholders is… TeSTAR!”

“…”

The name had changed.

As far as I knew, the original name of the boy group which was going to debut in this program was ‘STier’.

Looking back, I thought it would be that way again because it was listed as a candidate with an explanation attached as ‘Star + Tier’ on the homepage.

Maybe a different name came out because the members had changed quite a bit, including me.

It seemed the name had been decided by a narrow margin last time.

‘…Isn’t Stier better?’

I honestly didn’t expect a group name that would have star occupying more than half of the name.

I was a little confused, but… Well, as long as the group name wasn’t too weird.

“The seven members of TeSTAR will receive a trophy with the group logo on it!”

Then Youngrin came up and handed me the trophy. There was only one trophy in the shape of a graph soaring into the sky.

‘You set me up here to do this.’

I guess it would be over if I carried that and passed it on to the kids.

“Congratulations.”

“Thank you.”

After lightly shaking hands with Youngrin, I was handed the trophy with a cushion on it.

Youngrin looked at me with calm eyes and smiled.

“I hope you will do well.”

“Yes, thank you.”

I murmured a series of thanks.

Then just like that, I walked quickly toward the place where the winning participants were standing.

The winning participants had already stood up from their seats, probably drunk on the atmosphere.

“Wow!”

“They give us a trophy, too?”

I handed the trophy to the guy at the front without hesitation.

Then, this time around the trophy, we put our arms around each other and started making a fuss.

‘My shoulder hurts.’

Knocked between Cha Eugene and Keun Sejin, my body felt sore.

I felt numb everywhere from my shoulder to my feet, but thanks to the adrenaline, my brain was active.

I heard the MC’s voice from a distance.

“TeSTAR, congratulations on your debut!”

The stage fireworks effects exploded spectacularly. I listened to the cheers of the people as I stood between the trophies and the winning participants.

And at that moment.

A status window popped up.

[Successful debut!]

You made your debut through a famous audition program!

!Time limit: Fulfilled (Great success)

!Status abnormality: ‘Debut or Death’ removed!

[Check the truth ☜Click!]

‘…Really?’

I turned on the status window. The status abnormality was gone. It was over.

Somehow it didn’t feel real.

I didn’t know the purpose of the status window, it was probably because I had been haunted by the ominous prediction that the status abnormality might be prolonged somehow.

‘I never thought it would disappear so neatly.’

I blankly closed the status window. Then, the text at the bottom of the remaining pop-up caught my eye.

It was originally the location where the reward was supposed to be.

‘…Wait.’

What’s this?

[Check the truth ☜Click!]

The truth?

I reflexively clicked on the phrase.

“Moondae?”

For a moment, my vision was distorted.

And I blacked out.

* * *

A skinny high school student was lying on a mattress holding an old smartphone.

Every time he moved, the mattress creaked.

The WeTube screen was playing on the broken screen of the smartphone. The image quality was not good because it was barely connected to public

Wi-Fi.

However, thanks to the filming skill of the cameraman, the charm of the singer on the screen still stood out.

‘It was fun.’

The high school student, Park Moondae looked sadly at the returned video screen.

The latest fancams posted on this account now ended with the ‘2X0412 Reload Han River Festival’ that he just saw.

This account, ‘Gun1234’, was an account that mainly uploaded fancams of singers and idols.

In particular, it mainly uploaded low-profile people, but it still looked cool.

‘It feels like I am appreciating them.’

He somehow felt good because it felt like cheering for someone who didn’t look like much.

‘I hope it uploads more often.’

There were little things he could do to spend time happily without spending money.

It was the same on WeTube, where he could watch just by watching s.

Even though he watched it in low quality on Wi-Fi that kept disconnecting, there were a lot of videos that he could watch with his heart pounding.

He’d heard that there was almost no profit from fancams because all of the advertising revenue went to the singers, but he was grateful that they continued to upload.

Worrying over it, Park Moondae scrolled down and wrote a comment.

-Big Moon: GUN1234, I always enjoy your fancams. Thank you for the upload.

He knew that this account had never given any particular feedback to viewers until now.

Even when Youngrin's fancam was a hit, they never left any comment.

But just in case they might see it, Park Moondae checked for spelling errors and pressed the post button.

– This person is always present

– I guess they're a big fan

He was a little embarrassed because there were a few reply comments.

He thought about replying, but suddenly didn't feel like it, so he stopped.

'It's not like I have anything to say… '

When he tried to talk about himself, he became speechless.

The house, no, the room which was too embarrassing to be called home was quiet.

There was nothing to say about his daily life.

When he recalled the last time he was motivated to do something, he remembered a time when everything was normal.

When his parents were still there.

It felt like it was just yesterday, but in fact, it had been years.

And he felt like he had been stuck somewhere for years. Or maybe he was actually dreaming.

Maybe that's why I am so focused on the videos uploaded by that account, the boy thought.

It was comforting to see people singing and dancing passionately even though there was no sign of improvement in their situation.

'…Let's sleep.'

Tomorrow was probably Monday.

Park Moondae closed his eyes on the mattress and dreamed.

And time passed again. Unlike the flowing surroundings, Park Moondae alone hadn't changed.

A terrible thing happened at school. He quit just like that. Quitting didn't change anything.

Well, why didn't he just stop living?

'I know.'

But he didn't really want to die.

Park Moondae found a part-time job but soon lost the job.

Also, 'gun1234' stopped uploading videos.

'Why…?'

Park Moondae thought about it and eventually sent a note to the account. It was the day when he failed to find a new part-time job. Of course, he didn't get a reply.

And soon after, all the videos in the account disappeared.

Only short texts remained on the empty page.

[I quit to play games]

Game.

Park Moondae installed a mobile game. He had no money to buy a desktop or a game console.

However, his old smartphone couldn’t run mobile games properly and broke down after suffering terrible heat.

For some reason, Park Moondae felt very tired.

He hadn’t done anything, so there should be nothing to get tired of.

‘I’m tired.’

He was tired of living.

Park Moondae terminated his broken smartphone. And he didn’t extend the contract of the old one-room apartment either.

It had been a long time since he ate a proper meal. So the money he had left was just right.

It meant that if he got to a motel and bought sleeping pills, it would be over.

‘Because a lot of people die in motels.’

The day was so cold that he couldn’t bear to fall into the water or climb the mountain. Because he felt like he might give up halfway.

If he died in his room, he would be left to rot for more than a month.

‘I’m sorry.’

Park Moondae took a room and inwardly apologized to the curt owner.

Then, after going into the room, he lay down on the bed and swallowed sleeping pills.

Sleep came like death.

After a while.

Opening his eyes while breathing in on a dirty motel bed…

It was me.

* * *

“Gasp.”

I let out a breath.

“A-Are you okay?”

Someone next to me tapped me on the back. When I turned my head, I saw Seon Ahyeon’s worried face.

“…Wait, I’m tired.”

I barely managed to speak and stretched myself up.

Time seemed to barely pass. Thanks to that, I just looked like I had staggered for a while.

Because I was surrounded by the winning participants, the others didn’t notice at all; the atmosphere was still the same.

I broke out in a cold sweat. My mind was a mess.

The owner of Park Moondae’s favorite video account, ‘gun1234’.

‘It’s me’.

It was the account that I deleted when I started my public life.

Author's Thoughts

Seek professional help if you ever feel like committing sewerside

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CHAPTER 64

The videos Park Moondae was watching were also taken by me, and the phrase that I attached when I deleted my WeTube fancam account was the same.

– I quit to play games.

I didn’t necessarily have to prepare a public announcement; I didn’t want to write down my personal information.

Then, a flash of realization crossed my mind.

‘Maybe that’s why the status window popped up…!’

Did the karma come back to me through a game system because I used playing games as an excuse?!

‘…I don’t think I did anything wrong enough to cause a sudden death.’

Isn’t it rather strange to think that there was someone who gave meaning to the fancams I took to this extent?

Still… it left a bad aftertaste.

If the weird flashback I saw earlier was really the ‘truth’, I really had stopped breathing for a second and then I woke up.

So, it meant that Park Moondae, who lived in this body before, was really dead.

Isn’t he not the kind of guy who did something wrong enough to die like that?

‘I wish someone could help me, but… It’s difficult.’

Surprisingly, people were not interested in others. Except when it came to cursing out, of course.

Anyway, the process that got me into this body… Honestly, it was practically impossible, but I could see the justification behind it.

‘It was me who Park Moondae had an emotional bond with.’

But since I deleted the account and carried it away, It must have included abnormalities such as sudden death

It didn’t matter whether the person who created this status window did it because they felt sorry for Park Moondae or whether it was some kind of post-death mechanism.

‘This guy must be satisfied with this.’

Thanks to this, the guy you liked who used to film fancams now became an idol with your own body, so you could be filmed on fancams to your heart’s content.

I felt sorry and cool-headed at the same time. I felt like I would be able to live now that the situation became clear even if it was only half of it.

“These are the seven members of <TeSTAR> that shareholders have invested in! We look forward to your continued support and investment!”

At the words of the MC shouting from afar, paper petals burst from above.

“Fighting!”

“You’ve worked hard!”

“Let’s do well~”

The light on the broadcast camera was turned off as passing participants smiled and exchanged handshakes.

It was the ending.

People collapsed one after another, probably because their legs had loosened.

Various groups appeared on the stage, including the crying participants and the passing participants who approached the dropouts and exchanged congratulations and consolation.

And endless waves of cheers and slogans.

I breathed in.

‘Now there are only the activities left… ’

Ring.

[Outbreak!]

Status abnormality: ‘If you don’t get 1st place, you will die’ has occurred!

“…”

[‘Win first place or die’]

: If you don’t win first place on the music show within the time limit, you’ll die

Remaining period: D-365

You bastard.

If I meet the bastard who made this system, I won’t let them go. Definitely…!

* * *

The moment when Park Moondae was the most pissed off in his life.

In all kinds of online communities and SNS, posts about Idol Inc’s debut member confirmation were posted.

[Idol Inc debut members (7 members)]: Park Moondae, Cha Eugene, Seon Ahyeon, Kim Raebin, Ryu Chungwoo, Lee Sejin (Keun), and Lee Sejin (Actor) in order of ranking

Debut group name TeSTAR (Testar)

<Idol Inc.> was a hot topic as its rating was renewed again in the final episode despite its sluggish three-hour development.

Thanks to this, both those who watched the broadcast and those who couldn’t or didn’t watch it excitedly left comments.

Of course, there was quite a lot of talk about Park Moondae’s rapid rise and first-place rank.

– Park Moondae won?

– Heol

– Uaa, it was awesome at the end I’m in tears

– Seeing his spirit, he deserved it

– Congratulations! I hope it goes well

– As expected, the pity act worked

┗I know right. Isn’t it Park Moondae himself who leaked his draft resident registration?

┗? Are you crazy;;

Most of them were celebrating, but sarcastic words like ‘He won first place by selling family history’ appeared sporadically. There was even an article that analyzed the situation.

[Reason for Park Moondae winning first place]

: Family history bomb to core fans + accumulation of muggle pick.

It’s almost like the universe helped.

Cha Eugene is the type to sweep fans onto the stage. It seems he’s less liked by the muggles than Park Moondae because he didn’t have an emotional narrative that they liked.

And from the beginning, ‘Cha Eugene is debuting lol’ is due to him being a top-rank <- I think this is a situation caused by carelessness.

Of course, as soon as the fans who were immersed in the thrill of victory came to their senses, they began to cut through the provoking posts like a knife.

-They both debuted and there’s not much of a difference in their number of votes, but I am equally good at smacking

– Carelessly framing Park Moondae’s audition, Cha Eugene’s fans’ are bored of it~The fans are just happy that they both stick together, so please stop talking~ Because our kids are good on stage and they’re close

While the fans were fighting, the light viewers who just enjoyed the broadcast without hanging onto particular participants giggled as they posted their impressions of the last episode.

– I saw the production team’s tearful efforts to somehow increase the number of people.

└ Averaging the number and adding one person with the 1st place reward, are they for real

└Just give him the prize money Moondae’s situation doesn’t look good, I’m concerned…

└It’s okay, he’s going to make a lot of money from now on

On this side, there were often talks about Park Moondae’s choice.

– Park Moondae has a good brain. When 7th place got picked, I clapped in the living room too

– It was rather cool to neatly leave the judgment to the viewers without needlessly arguing with other participants!

└That’s right! It feels like, ‘You bastard, you believe in our eyes (snort)’

└Honestly, that’s a choice that made sense, but it was hard not to call a close participant there.

└Yeah, I thought he would call Heeseung Even when Moondae was called out, Heeseung took care of him

└Park Moondae knew how to distinguish between works

Most were favorable. It was the moment when Park Moondae’s judgment won.

In the meantime, malicious fans of the eliminated participants and antis of the successful participants leaked subtle messages in order to somehow drive a wedge between the debut members.

– When Lee Sejin joined, it looked like Park Moondae couldn’t manage his expression for a while I don’t think they’re close

└Isn’t it because of Lee Sejin’s skills and attitude?

└This is it. Park Moondae probably thought that getting the guy who was rumored to be dating would be better. If I were him, I would have regretted not choosing Heeseung

└Stop making speculative remarks. Moondae’s face stayed the same, what are you saying…

└Don’t use our Moondae for your insults

There was a limit to what the fans could do to block them, and articles that ruined the atmosphere continued to come up.

In particular, the attack on Lee Sejin, who barely made it to the end with the first-place reward, was fierce.

– Frankly, Lee Sejin is on his own in the debut group line-up Among the kids who all went to the stage, he appeared as a cider meme alone

└Honestly, Lee Sejin Isn’t it because cool guys trust and depend on themselves?

└That’s right. It was something pointless, but t was thanks to the fact that the fans started selling it as memes, so his initial image was pushed well.

└Aigoo, you crazy people

(TL notes: ‘Cider’ means a soda drink such as Sprite in Korea. But it is often used as the opposite meaning of sweet potato by Koreans. When you have sweet potato and you feel uneasy and stuff, if you drink ‘cider’, you feel great and happy. Cider is used to express that kind of feeling. Sumber: Google.)

Thanks to numerous reports and blockages, after a few days, the number of swearing at the successful participants on the surface had decreased a lot.

Instead, the excitement of fans waiting for the debut members’ activities overflowed everywhere.

[Countdown to Testa’s debut song, will it become a national boy group? (Article)]

: There was an article, so I brought it up! It is said that they will start their activities within a month (Link)

– Gosh, I like it I can’t wait to see them!

– Let’s go and leave a good comment.

– They’re going to an agency under the T1 group, right? I’m looking forward to the taste of capital from big companies!

└Really! I hope they make a lot of music videos and songs

└The ratings and popularity of the program are all at a peak this time, so I’m looking forward to T1. They said they’re creating a new agency~

└Wow~ If you go in with a lot of investment, the kids can do everything!

Those who were newly introduced to the idol fandom through the successful audition program waited for the debut album with commonsensical expectations and hope.

And as always in this area, common sensibility was not a hope, but a dream.

Thanks to this, there was tension among the people who had deep experience in idol-fangirling.

– They said they'd release their debut song in a month but is this for real…?

└Let's just think that there is already a song prepared, it's good for mental health

– I heard the agency hasn't come out yet. It seems they're so successful that they have an internal fight

– I heard that T1 is launching a new agency for Testar, are they crazy? It looks like our kids are heading to the ground…

└T1 is big but they don't even have experience with idol agencies

└Sigh… They named the group Testar and use it as a real tester;;

-It seems that the executive is trying to give someone a career… Ah, that's so lame

Overall, there was an atmosphere of caution, fearing that the large corporation which was only big in size without any expertise would be crazy about money and career.

– Is there any news… Please upload a group photo of the kids…

– There are no news for the past ten days. Let me see the faces of the kids.

– I want to see what happened after the formation of Testar, not the behind-the-scenes of Idol Inc Very sick of it

Fortunately, by the time people grew tired, new content popped up.

[This is TeSTAR’s account!]

: Hello, everyone! We’re the newly debuted rookie group, Testa! Please take care of us _ (Photo)

Testar’s official SNS account was opened.

The photo attached to the first post was a picture of Testar sitting in a group and laughing with a living room as a background.

Considering the casual clothes and comfortable posture, it was clear they were in the new dorm.

– !!

– I think the kids have entered the dorm

– It seems they’ve caught the agency

– Ah, the debut album is already successful. If they don’t succeed with the combination of these faces, it’s corrupted

Fans were greatly relieved just by one SNS post.

In an instant, Testar’s SNS followers and shares began to gather thousands of units per minute.

People enjoyed the photo at the nanoscale.

– Moondae’s yellow hoodie is so cute, where did you find such a cute thing

– Moon Puppy, I was worried because you always wore a T-shirt every day, so this grandma is so relieved that you have bought a new outfit…

-Raebin pierced his ears.

└CCCrazy, it looks great on this mad dog

└Please wear scary fancy earrings during activities, please

– Eugene is lying on the sofa. It’s already his house

└ I was checking with a smile then I got surprised because his legs are so long…

Since it was a group that was formed through an audition, there were still a lot of people who only mentioned the members they liked.

Having played a lot of team matches together, the members shared good feelings.

However, as a result, the preferred bunch was also slightly divided.

– Guys, please upload a lot in the future!

With so much excitement and anticipation, but with some anxiety at the same time, Testar started their full-fledged activities.

And the parties involved were already facing uneasy factors.

* * *

“Sigh.”

How did I manage to get into the dorm?

I entered the door with a sigh.

I sighed when I thought of the week-long struggle between companies and the contract for the group’s dorm which also turned out to be a struggle.

Of course, I shouldn’t make it obvious.

There were cameras from here to the bedroom.

“Hey! I love it!”

“Cool!”

“Wow…”

We started with a reality show contract first.

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CHAPTER 65

It was common for a group debuting in a survival program to film a reality show.

This was because they could bring in some characters and the popularity gained from the audition program.

‘…Still, I didn’t expect to go straight into filming right away after one meeting like this.’

Even during the meeting, I didn’t hear much about it.

It was just an interview about what the members wanted to do.

‘It’s a relief that the dorm is good at least.’

Maybe they were conscious of the filming, but the dorm was more splendid than I thought. It was the first time I stayed in a large new apartment with such good security.

Of course, there were cameras on every corner.

“Ah, camera!”

“Hello…?”

The guys who took off their shoes at the entrance and ran to the living room looked at the camera and pretended to know. It was an action that had been requested in advance.

‘They said it’s unnatural to look like we aren’t too aware of the camera.’

In the first place, if there were this many of them, it would be more difficult not to be conscious.

Even in the living room, there were several cameramen and production crew waiting in the blind spot of the unmanned camera.

From what I heard, they stayed for a while today for the first cut of the reality show, and they would withdraw leaving only the unmanned cameras behind.

“First of all… Congratulations on passing, everyone~”

“Wow~!”

“Our proof shot!”

The passing participant sitting around the living room clapped and took a picture together before starting the reality show.

“Wow, it feels like a new team match has begun.”

“I think you’re right, except that the team match is happening for five years.”

“Oh~ Raebin seems good at this?”

Fortunately, everyone looked natural.

‘This is how you benefit from living with the camera all the time in <Idol Inc.>.’

In addition, the atmosphere was friendly with the joy of passing.

They were three times less sensitive and tolerant than they were at the time of the audition, exchanging good wishes and jokes and laughing together.

“You all did a great job.”

“That’s right. I feel like I can enjoy anything now!”

“L-Let’s have a good time…!”

And at the right time, a robot vacuum cleaner suddenly popped out of the crew’s camera blind spot.

It was the mascot of this reality show and the main PPL.

“Huh?”

“What does he have!”

A card covered with glitter glue dangled near the vacuum’s head.

Quick-handed Cha Eugene lifted the vacuum cleaner and pulled out the card.

“What’s written on it?”

“Right!”

Cha Eugene excitedly read the contents of the card while still holding the robot vacuum cleaner on his side.

“Hm… ‘You guys… From now on, you’ll receive missions through cards! Clear the mission so that you can become a true group!””

“Ah.”

“M-Mission.”

The atmosphere darkened slightly. There was no reaction to the trauma.

Ryu Chungwoo laughed as if he had given up.

“Haha, I passed the audition, but the mission doesn’t end…”

I thought bitterly.

‘…To be a true group, I think we need to pull our acts together, starting from the agency.’

I thought of Tnet, which repeatedly notified and canceled the change of affiliation three times a day, three days ago.

I had a bad feeling.

‘I feel like I had a meaningless expectation.’

Because the program was so successful this time, it seemed they wanted to roll Testar by creating a new direct agency at the T1 level.

However, since there were contracts with Tnet subsidiaries in the past, taking the group away was difficult.

So, because they were busy fighting each other, the group was in a state of neglect.

I read an article this morning that we would be releasing a debut song within a month. But we hadn’t even met our manager yet.

‘It’s driving me crazy.’

I held back my sigh.

At that time, Cha Eugene raised his hand.

“Oh? There’s more! ‘Today’s mission is… Free time!'”

“Ooh!!”

In an instant, the atmosphere turned relaxed.

I also said ‘I’m very happy with the break I got today.’ and received high fives from the guys around me.

‘Let’s not think about it.’

It was almost confirmed that we entered T1’s new agency anyway.

Rookies without spare time had no authority. I just had to accept it.

‘…Please don’t add your relatives to the planning.’

I hoped the high-ranking people would take care of the sales, accounting, and management and didn’t touch the planning. Please use the people experienced on the job.

“Look at our room! Let’s get a room!”

The passing participants stood up with the ‘free time’ card and started touring the house.

Three rooms and three bathrooms. It was a good composition that could be used plenty.

And there was a number sign in front of each bedroom.

“Testar’s first~ mini-game! The subject is choosing a room!”

“You sounded the same.”

“R-Really.”

Kim Raebin volunteered to imitate the MC of <Idol Inc.> but he sounded similar enough to stimulate PTSD that we became solemn again. Still, the game went on without a problem.

We picked notes from a box in the order which was determined through several board games with so many random elements.

“This also has a strange deja vu…”

“I know right…”

Every time it overlapped with <Idol Inc.>, the kids got sentimental.

Anyway, I pulled out the second note after Cha Eugene.

It was number one.

‘I avoided number three.’

Bedroom no. 3, the main bedroom, was shared by three people. Naturally, two people were much better than three.

‘I wish I can share a room with a quiet guy.’

For now, I had dodged Cha Eugene.

‘I’ll just have to dodge Keun Sejin.’

As soon as I thought so, Lee Sejin, who was next in order, pulled out number 1.

“…”

Right before a silence broke out, Keun Sejin and Ryu Chungwo hit in.

“Oh~ Moondae and Sejin hyung are in the same room~”

“Both of them are fragile types, so I think they’ll get along well.”

“Right?”

It was fortunate that there were quick-witted guys.

“Take good care of me.”

I quickly reached out my hand, and Lee Sejin slowly held out his hand and shook mine.

‘I’m a bit worried about this filming.’

I liked that he seemed to be the quiet type.

However, the camera would be running for 2-3 weeks, so the key was whether or not this guy would pretend to be friendly during that time.

‘The production team will take care of it.’

It was not an audition, but a reality show, so I figured the editing would go well.

It wasn’t good for the production team if there was a controversy.

“Let’s quickly pick one too~”

The remaining room ended up being assigned to people with polar opposites.

Kim Raebin and Seon Ahyeon were in the same room.

“P-Please take care of me.”

“I look forward to your kind cooperation and please take care of me as well.”

Looking at the two guys who weren’t close to each other having a greeting battle, I thought it would be uncomfortable over there, too.

Of course, they were still better off than me.

First of all, neither of them had the same personality as Lee Sejin.

“Oh~ Our room looks really fun, right?”

“I like the big room!”

“Okay! Let’s get along.”

And room number 3 for 3 people… Keun Sejin, Cha Eugene, and Ryu Chungwoo shared the room together.

It was already noisy. However, Ryu Chungwoo looked somewhat satisfied.

‘Come to think of it, Ryu Chungwoo’s position is a little unresolved.’

Except for Cha Eugene, Ryu Chungwoo never met any of the winning participants personally.

It would be better to get into a crowded room and catch up on the situation quickly.

The fact that there was also Keun Sejin who was friendly and polite to his seniors must be the icing on the cake.

Following the crew’s signal, I immediately moved to the bedroom to unpack and rest.

“Which bed would you like to use?”

“It doesn’t matter to me.”

“Really?”

In that case.

I went straight to the bed on the left and unpacked. It was on the other side of the living room, so there would be less noise ringing on the wall.

By the way, Lee Sejin was also looking at this bed. Thanks to that, I was at loss for words again.

“…”

It’s not a survival show so why should I please you?

I planned to do whatever I wanted in the places where I wouldn’t get caught.

Lee Sejin looked this way without saying anything, then went to the other side and unpacked.

With a calm mind, I started unpacking my things. Actually, I didn’t have much, so I didn’t have anything to organize.

Oh, I bought some clothes because I didn’t have a lot of them. It was with the prize money that my team won by a narrow margin in the final.

I heard that because of the problem with the time distribution in the final, it was announced on the Internet after the program ended and got criticized a bit, but well, it was fine because I still got the money.

By the way, the kimchi refrigerator… I hadn’t received it yet. There were no other swindlers like them.

‘I’m getting a little pissed off.’

By the time I folded my last clothes with a sigh, the quiet room was filled with the sound of human voices.

“Ta-da!”

“As expected, room number 1 is good. Is it because this is where the first place stayed?”

It was the guys from room three.

While Cha Eugene and Keun Sejin were happily wandering around the room, Ryu Chungwoo, a graduate of the National University, taught me how to unpack, so I finished organizing in an instant.

“Is there anything you want to eat for dinner?”

Ryu Chungwoo smiled and sat down on the bed.

“Galbi!”

“Jokbal!”

Cha Eugene was understandable, but it seemed Keun Sejin was being extra on purpose to get more screen time.

…Suddenly, I had a foreboding feeling that I wouldn’t be able to escape this ruckus while the reality show was in progress.

* * *

We had to cook and eat dinner together. Thanks to this, I cooked for more than 2 servings for the first time in a long time.

‘Cooking is better than going to the grocery store.’

Once I went out, I had to talk more. Because there would be fewer people with me.

In addition, it took quite a bit of courage to enter the large mart with three cameras.

Anyway, the cooking was quite successful. Surprisingly, the supports did well.

Except for Seon Ahyun.

“S-S-Sorry…”

“You have nothing to apologize for.”

I think you should apologize to your own hands instead of me.

I kicked Seon Ahyeon out of the kitchen after he almost cut his own hand for the third time.

Seon Ahyeon, who was anxious, was relieved when he was given a job setting the table instead.

‘…That’s why the old lady came to his house.’

I was wondering why they attached a worker to a guy who was good at housework. It was because he was terrible at cooking.

Anyway, the jjimdak was well done. It was Ryu Chungwoo who picked this menu that after winning the rock-paper-scissors.

‘I tried to cook it on my birthday because eating out was a waste of money, but it ended up being useful like this.’

I shrugged my shoulders as I recalled my birthday in the first year of earning money from selling data.

“It looks delicious.”

“Right.”

“…”

Lee Sejin did not respond in particular to Kim Raebin’s words, but he was surprisingly cooperative in cooking.

‘Is it because I am holding a knife?’

I tidied up the kitchen knife I was still holding. In the meantime, the jjimdak was taken to the table in the hands of the grocery shopping group.

“Oh~ The jjimdak is really good!”

“The soy sauce is well seasoned and soft.”

The meal was a success.

“Should I learn how to cook, too?”

“I’m good at cooking.”

“Oh? Then you should cook!”

“But grocery shopping is better.”

With Cha Eugene’s bright remark, the reality show’s introduction was wrapped up.

“Thank you for your hard work~”

As the filming team withdrew, they installed a claw machine in the living room.

All the dolls inside were placed with the back of their heads facing up.

‘It would be creepy to see it at night.’

Anyway, they asked us to pull out one of those dolls after we got surprised to see it in the living room tomorrow.

‘It’s pulling out doll content.’

I heard that we would meet the manager tomorrow and finally started an album meeting with the agency, but to do that, I needed a good sleep.

I quickly entered the room with the determination to sleep a lot today.

Lee Sejin was already in bed and looking at his smartphone.

“Good night.”

“…You too.”

Is it because he ate well? He seemed a little more relaxed than in the morning.

I immediately put on earplugs and went to bed. The last thing I saw was the camera spinning alone in the corner.

‘I hope the people I meet tomorrow don’t just talk nonsense.’

And this wish was only half fulfilled.

* * *

The manager was a decent guy.

“If you need anything, just tell me!”

He looked gentle and his critical point seemed high. He looked like the kind of person who wouldn’t raise his hand to a child.

‘Indeed, we’re already too popular to be called rookies.’

“Once you start the album activities, there will be another manager, so don’t worry!”

“Yes!”

First of all, there was a high possibility that the person who spoke up first would set the atmosphere, so I decided not to care about that for now.

And the meeting with the agency.

This is…

“The talented Testar is in charge of organizing the songs, right?”

“…? Yes?”

To sum it up, it’s sh*t.

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CHAPTER 66

From the moment I met and talked to the agency official, I felt awkward.

He had been working in the planning and marketing team of another T1 affiliate, but this time he was appointed as the director.

In short, this person was the head of the company's business division, and he had no experience in the entertainment business.

*'F*ck.'*

Fortunately, the content production team underneath him seemed to have been packed with experienced people, but this punk sounded strange.

"Worldview?"

"These days, most idols who are aiming for global fandom have a worldview. Right? All young kids… You like cartoons and stuff."

"…"

You're holding tightly onto useless things.

Worldview? That's nice.

But if you say that you will release a new song within a month, is it okay to start by talking about the worldview? Even if it's a single, you should talk about the song right away.

And Testar wasn't in a hurry to see the world.

‘I made all kinds of characters and stories through auditions, but what are you saying… ’

As far as I knew, the worldview was about providing content that fans could immerse themselves in and play with, but <Idol Inc.> itself was made for that kind of content.

In addition, the members had already gone through the debut process, gaining public awareness and positioning.

This meant that the agency only needed to bring popular songs, sophisticated choreography, and costumes.

Even if the worldview was still rough, it didn’t matter since we could be built it slowly while preparing for the next album.

‘Did you see a lecture or something?’

Recently, as agencies had been appealing their own independent capabilities due to the stock issue, it seemed that this guy was also affected by it because he kept referring to the worldview as if it were some kind of great plan of the century.

‘It’s because it’s your career.’

What was even crazier was that he worked hard without knowing much about it.

“…Us?”

“Yeah! I watched the broadcast, you guys were doing good.”

The director praised each member, saying that he ‘binge-watched’ <Idol Inc.> diligently, and then he brought up a bombshell.

“Well, let me tell you right now. You’re going to perform two songs.”

“…?!”

“However, the company will only be in charge of one song. The other one will be managed by the talented Testar.”

Of course, we would do the confirmation and revision ourselves.

“Making it according to our world view, just like this~ It’s nice, isn’t it? Self-produced!”

Self-produced idols are the trend, blah blah blah…

He wanted to do everything that others said was good.

It seemed he wanted the new agency to have an image ‘independent and hip’.

Of course, the members were bewildered, but as befitting of those who successfully completed <Idol Inc.> where all kinds of tricks ran rampant, they didn’t show it.

“Ah, thank you very much… But it might be difficult with our capabilities alone.”

“Uhm~ Of course, all the staff do it together. You are free! Uh, make good use of your creativity and your inspiration, this is what I mean.”

“Yes…”

The high-ranking person who was almost twenty years older was adamant, so Ryu Chungwoo swallowed his words with a bitter smile.

Kim Raebin’s expression was already turning blank.

‘You’re out of your mind.’

As I thought about what to do, I was more stunned by the enormous amount of work compared to the time limit.

“Come on, we have a lot of work to do, so we have to get up now, right?”

“Y-Yes.”

The director left after saying what he had to say. It was evident that he was happy that he had taken the time to take care of ‘Testar’ himself.

‘…Was the CEO also the nephew of T1’s owner?’

The future had already been drawn.

‘…It’s going to be hard if we don’t get first place this time.’

Looking back, I should have guessed it from the moment T1 suddenly created a new agency in order to intercept <Idol Inc.>’s debut group.

‘It’s a land that they fought and stole away… Of course, it would be impossible to continue with the preparations for the debut album that the original agency was going to do.’

Thanks to this, we had to make a new album right away.

In addition, since a person who was not familiar with the industry was sitting on top of the working staff, bullshit was running rampant and the deadline was extremely short.

‘Um, I really want to quit.’

…Again, I vowed not to expect much from this company.

The situation was the same in subsequent meetings with several people from the content production team and the A&R team under the producer.

These people hadn’t had any results yet.

…Actually, it was understandable. It had been less than two weeks since this agency was launched.

“Um… First of all, our worldview will go with the ‘school’ motif.”

“Ah… Yes.”

“I think we can focus on that. Um…”

There was no practical benefit other than just saying that the worldview was related to school.

“Of course, I’m not saying you should make a song at all. We will send you the candidate songs as soon as we get the final confirmation, so please take a look at them.”

“Yes!”

“How long will it take?”

“Ah, um… It’ll be out in two days.”

Fortunately, these people were basically fond of the Testar members.

‘It’s thanks to the nationwide successful audition.’

First of all, the investment was basically guaranteed, and they had a personal liking toward the group, so the treatment also became more personal.

“They asked a lot of our opinions.”

Keun Sejin said after coming out of the meeting.

“O-Originally, i-isn’t it supposed to be like that?”

“Yes!”

“Yeah!”

Unexpectedly, Cha Eugene and Kim Raebin responded strongly. Seon Ahyeon was taken aback.

“He didn’t listen!”

“He didn’t let us speak at all. The atmosphere was saying that working hard by following instructions is a virtue!”

“U-Uh…”

Cha Eugene and Kim Raebin even recorded their debut song at their former agency, but it seemed that there were a lot of pent-up feelings because they got knocked down.

‘Their agency was doing well. maybe… Did it go bankrupt because their figurehead idol filed a lawsuit over a fraudulent contract?’

It seemed that the two of them got caught up in the process, so they left the agency and appeared in the audition program.

“There are some things I am worried about, but it’s a good environment to work hard. Let’s try our best.”

“Yep!”

“Yes!”

Ryu Chungwoo laughed, checked the number of members, and then got into the car.

There was some talk about it, but it was almost certain that Ryu Chungwoo was the leader.

First of all, Lee Sejin, who was one of the oldest, didn’t fit to be a leader, and the agency preferred to have an older person lead.

We would go through a plausible process in reality, but… It was pretty much fixed.

I didn’t have a complaint.

“I like home~ Oh?”

“What is it?”

“Claw doll machine!”

Cha Eugene was the first to enter the living room and ran after seeing the claw machine.

The director had called us early in the morning, so it seemed he’d forgotten that it was there because he had gone out half-asleep.

‘Thanks to that, his reaction is real.’

I went closer and took a look. Cameras were installed inside and outside of the machine.

The robot vacuum cleaner reappeared and handed over a card. It meant that we should roughly pick out a doll and carry out the mission inside.

“Hmm, ‘Each doll has Testar’s anonymous missions’…Oh, am curious.”

“Let’s pick one!”

Most of the members were excited and stuck to the machine. For now, Cha Eugene, who was the first to grab the steering wheel, took control of it.

“Yap!”

The result was a disastrous failure.

“…The machine is weird.”

“Leave it up to me~”

Keun Sejin took over the joystick from Cha Eugene who withered away and moved excitedly. And likewise, he failed.

“He’s right. The machine is weird.”

Since then, countless failures continued.

In the midst of lame excuses from those who couldn’t accept the results, I politely declined from joining.

‘It’s troublesome.’

If I just turned around, someone would take over.

And it was Lee Sejin who grabbed the joystick.

“…Which doll?”

“Rabbit!”

“P-Puppy…”

And Lee Sejin succeeded in pulling it out at once.

“…!”

The moment the furry brown rabbit’s head dropped to the outlet, people accepted the result.

“W-Wow!”

“Hyung-nim, you’re good with your hands.”

“This was something I could pull out at once.”

“Can I pull another one?”

However, the claw machine had already stopped working.

It was probably a homemade machine designed to stop automatically once one was pulled out.

Behind Kim Raebin, who murmured that he would definitely pull out one tomorrow, the members stuck to the rabbit doll.

When I turned the doll over, a card was attached to its belly.

“Then, who wrote which…”

[Watch a horror movie together~*^^*]

“…”

“…Is it you?”

“Hey, no way.”

Keun Sejin waved his hand. He was confident that he had written more usable content.

And Ryu Chungwoo calmly answered.

“Ah, it’s me.”

“Wow! That sounds fun. Horror movies!”

“I-I’m looking forward to it…!”

The surrender of the older person they weren’t very close with created an urgently mild atmosphere.

In the end, I spent the evening watching a horror movie. I concentrated on the popcorn as the movie was streamed. Screams rang in my brain.

It was a waste of time, but I felt comfortable.

And the next day, early in the morning, the demos for the debut title track arrived.

It was time for me to suffer.

* * *

“My ears hurt.”

Cha Eugene said after listening to all the demo songs about 20 times with the volume turned up.

Almost everyone except Kim Raebin faintly agreed with that. I just nodded.

Those who had been excited and enthusiastic about having their own songs were exhausted after listening to the songs for several hours.

“…I don’t think there will be a big change now even if we listen more, so let’s raise our hands”

“Yes~”

“Then starting with number 1.”

That was how it went to the last number 11.

They had a tendency. It was similar to what I had already seen while working on <Idol Inc.>.

First of all, Seon Ahyeon and Ryu Chungwoo preferred a medium tempo. Seon Ahyeon especially liked lyrical songs.

And Kim Raebin and Cha Eugene preferred songs with strong bass and rhythm.

Keun Sejin chose the trendy genre. And he raised his hand only on kitsch melodies.

I didn’t know about Lee Sejin because he raised his hand only for one song. I was the only one left… I just picked the ones that sound good.

But, as to how I could do that.

It was because of this characteristic which was selected in the <Successful stage> pop-up displayed during the live broadcast of <Idol Inc.>’s last episode.

[Characteristic: Snatching ears (A)]

– Do you think this song will do well?

: Ability to distinguish masterpieces +200%

The grade was A.

It stopped on a platinum-colored slot, in which there was only one in every ten slots.

‘Even without considering its grade, I have to keep it.’

If I was going to be in the music business, there was no other characteristic as useful as this.

Thanks to this, the characteristic ‘I want to be the center’ that raised my talent by one level was abandoned, but it was worth it.

To be honest, I even thought about throwing out ‘I heard it’s true’, but I kept it for now because I thought it could be used in various situations.

‘It’s fine because I leveled up my fallen talent stat through practice and stage achievements during the final.’

So here was my current status window.

[Name: Park Moondae (Ryu Gunwoo)]

Level : 0

Title: None

Vocal: A

Dance: C+

Visual: B+

Talent: B-

Characteristics: Infinite potential, I heard it’s true (C), Bacchus 500 (B), Snatching ears (A)

!Status abnormality: Win first place or die

The remaining points: 1

The problem was that the ability to distinguish songs obtained this time was not added as a fixed amount, but rather, it was added proportionally.

‘It means that if I am tone-deaf in the first place, the increase is ambiguous.’

I didn’t know because I’d never been very conscious of it, but since it was amplified to 300%, I thought it would work to some extent.

So the song I chose was…

“Then Moondae, you only pick number 7?”

“Yes.”

Number 7 was the only one good.

The song was rather dreamy, with a trendy beat and a popular melody, which made it uniquely pleasing to listen to.

‘The rest is weak.’

The development was either slow or quickly worn out. I didn’t know the music theory, but I just trusted my ‘ears’ and judged it.

Still, Kim Raebin’s eyes shone as if it was plausible.

“It seems hyung has a good ear. Number 7 is the most perfect.”

“Hey, Raebin, you’re too much~ Is this hyung’s ear bad then?”

“N-No, that’s not what I meant…”

When Kim Raebin was sweating at Keun Sejin’s joke, Ryu Chungwoo smiled and sorted out the situation.

“Then there are number two and number seven left in a tie. Let’s focus on these two songs.”

“Yes~”

Number 2 was an R&B song that was easy to listen to.

‘I didn’t raise my hand because I quickly got tired of it.’

Anyway, everyone seemed exhausted, so I agreed without a word.

‘I’ll have to push number 7 more properly next time.’

As soon as we finished the morning like that, we got called again.

It was a meeting with the content production team. I heard that the company had selected a title track.

‘…Shouldn’t they discuss the song with the A&R team?’

I had a bad feeling this time, but I couldn’t avoid it.

And the song they came up with…

“How is it? Is it okay?”

“…Yes.”

The song was good.

The problem was that they brought the concept of a baseball club to a disco song…

It was driving me crazy.

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CHAPTER 67

The reason why a baseball club concept suddenly popped out was because of the director.

It was said that the existing concept brought out by the staff was rejected yesterday evening.

“The director has set the world view similar to cartoon movies. He said that the background of school in cartoons is sports, um, so it’s decided to be a baseball club.”

By the way, the original concept was retro.

‘Isn’t it too irrational to use as a school-related worldview?’

Still, it was at least suitable for a disco song.

A disco song and baseball club… It was neither rice nor porridge.

(TL notes: It was neither rice nor porridge = a project or an event that doesn’t result in anything. Like when you try to cook rice and it becomes neither porridge nor rice.)

As if they knew that, the staff kept talking about the song.

The story of the director popped out because they also felt it was unfair, but it was clear that they were regretting what they had done.

“We worked on a tight schedule, but the song came out well in our opinion.”

“Um, yes.”

Come to think of it, it was a song I had heard somewhere. Originally, this was the debut song for <Idol Inc.>’s passing participants. Although the arrangement was a bit different and there were no lyrics yet.

“Everyone… I hope you can set a concept that doesn’t feel too different from this youthful style of students.”

“Yes, I’ll do my best.”

“If it doesn’t go well, it’s okay to just choose a song and give it to me!”

“Ah… Yes.”

“Don’t worry, just tell me quickly~”

‘I don’t have much expectation.’

I just felt the urgency of office workers to meet the deadline quickly.

‘We really don’t have much time.’

Perhaps, if it became more urgent, ‘Testar’s participation’ would be used only for marketing purposes, and the company would take care of everything.

I wonder how the album we prepared so hastily would turn out… Hmm, it wasn’t a very promising prospect.

“Thank you!”

The mood of the members coming out of the meeting was uncertain.

Everyone felt it instinctively. That the debut performance reviews were not going to be great.

Ryu Chungwoo opened his mouth.

“…Shall we do our best?”

“Yes.”

“They say we’re going to use a studio or something like that!”

Surprisingly, opinions that we should pick the results as soon as possible were gathered, even if meant staying up all night.

These guys, who hadn’t forgotten their habit of working to death in auditions, had become accustomed to choosing and thinking about the results first.

“Guys, wait!”

As I confirmed that the manager was urgently contacting the reality show crew, I felt a strong premonition.

‘I won’t be able to sleep for more than five hours.’

The great death march to organize debut activities within a month had just begun.

* * *

The studio where the reality show camera was hastily installed was in the basement of a building near the company.

‘I heard that there are no extra studios or choreography practice rooms in the company yet.’

It was an agency that had no system, mentally and physically.

“Hello~”

“We’re working from now on!”

After responding appropriately to the camera, the discussion began right away.

“Let’s choose between number 2 and number 7. A majority vote?”

“Yes!”

What I wanted to push was number 7.

The result was 4:3.

“Then it’s number 2?”

“Yes~”

It was number 2’s victory.

‘…It has become difficult.’

The people who voted for number 2 were Ryu Chungwoo, Keun Sejin, Seon Ahyeon, and Lee Sejin.

“Since the company’s song is an exciting disco, I think it would be better for us to choose a song that is easier to listen to.”

“The medium tempo in number 2 is easy to listen to. Should I say it’s like a faint youthful feeling? Don’t you think it would be nice to use it with the school concept?”

“M-Me too… Number 2.”

To sum it up, it meant that they were conscious of the company’s song and considered the school concept.

‘Hmm.’

I wanted to try persuading them, but the timing to bring it up was risky since I was beaten by the majority vote from the beginning. If I looked like I couldn’t accept the result, I would sound less convincing.

‘Should I try my luck again after a while?’

And after a while. The timing arrived with unwelcome news.

“Uh? Heol!”

“Ah…”

It was because I briefly looked at my smartphone while eating dinner and saw this article.

[Comeback war in June, from VTIC to Cha Dolche]

The article was sorting out the singers who would make a comeback next month, in June.

And among them, VTIC was in the ‘scheduled second week of June’ category.

Our scheduled date was just around there.

*‘F*ck.’*

So… It meant that the group worth counting on your fingers on, who could push aside Testar’s first week of debut with <Idol Inc.> on its back, would come out together with us.

“If the article is right… Our activity will overlap with VTIC sunbae-nim, right?”

Keun Sejin, who finished the calculation quickly, murmured.

“…I can get their autographs.”

“U-Uh…”

The members made awkward noises and laughed bitterly.

If the schedule was really fixed like this, we were practically sentenced to give up first place on the public broadcast.

Besides, looking at the way the company had been doing so far, it was going to be difficult.

‘Looking at how the director is so full of himself, he’ll probably talk nonsense about having a chance of winning against VTIC. Even if the staff persuaded him, it would be delayed for a week.’

Even if we considered it as the best-case scenario, it was the second week after VTIC. We would still be pushed out of the weight class.

‘There were definitely more than 1.8 million copies of the last album.’

Therefore, it meant that we had to choose the right song so that the outline of winning first place could be visible.

‘I can’t waste the opportunity to avoid sudden death.’

Now was the time to bring it up.

“…Wait a minute.”

I immediately changed my stance.

“I’m sorry for bringing this up when the agreement is already over, but no matter how much I think about it, I want to push for number 7.”

“Huh?”

The members were startled.

‘…?’

I thought they’d be annoyed that I was dragging on a conversation that was already over, but this felt a little different.

“W-Why?”

“Oh, it’s the first time I’ve seen Moondae do this. Are you feeling emotional?”

“I guess you really like demo song number 7.”

“Have the overlapping activities with VTIC sunbae-nim awakened Moondae?”

“…”

These guys were sitting there wondering.

Say whatever you want. At any rate, it had to be number 7.

“Um, Moondae. I know it’s such a shame, but it’s hard to reverse what’s already been concluded. It’s a majority vote and we don’t have much time.”

Ryu Chungwoo smiled at the other members but tried to straighten out the situation.

‘No way.’

I had a headache just imagining how angry I would be while waiting for the next album if I missed first place by a narrow margin.

‘Besides, if the next album doesn’t win first place because of poor form, I will really be at risk of sudden death.’

“Give me five minutes. I’d like to try to persuade you.”

“…R-Really?”

“Moondae even go this far?”

“It’s weird!”

I didn’t mean to, but the members started to make a fuss.

‘…What the hell did you think of Park Moondae?’

Anyway, it was a good introduction that stirred up a commotion. I quickly sorted things out.

‘If we’re going to go by a majority anyway, I only need to win one person who’s easy to persuade. The score was 4 to 3.’

“First of all, Keun Sejin… And Chungwoo hyung, you guys chose number 2 because of the concept, right?

“Ah, that’s right.”

“Yes.”

The two nodded obediently. They were willing to listen.

It seemed that after 5 minutes, Ryu Chungwoo would get it sorted out again, so I had to quickly develop a story.

“If we exclude the concept and compare the songs objectively, number 7 was okay, right?”

“I like number seven a little more. But isn’t that not enough?”

Keun Sejin immediately replied.

‘I got you.’

“Because it doesn’t go well with the company’s title track?”

“That’s right.”

“Then why don’t we change the company’s song?”

“…??”

In an instant, all the group members became noisy.

“Hyung, that’s a little…”

“It’s impossible!”

“…There’s no way we can do that.”

“But I do want to change it.”

“Wait a minute.”

Ryu Chungwoo took control of the conversation again.

“Moondae, think about it. Even if we leave out the company’s song, number 7 itself is school, youth… It’s not a song that goes well with this.”

“That’s right.”

Kim Raebin nodded sullenly after choosing number 7.

“Number 7 is a deep house song. In addition, it is somewhat dreamy because it was shot with the riff melody of kalimba… It’s hard to bring out the ‘youth’ theme. If you remove that part of the arrangement, the charm of the song will disappear.”

I shook my head.

“We can make that concept come alive without getting rid of it.”

“…”

I brought out the idea that I had been thinking about while we were talking about the concept at the company.

“…”

‘Their faces are saying it’s plausible.’

Kim Raebin already looked like he was creating something in his head with a dazed expression.

“No, that… That’s a good idea.”

Ryu Chungwoo struggled to open his mouth.

“I don’t know if the company staff will be persuaded. We’re running out of time.”

“…”

He couldn’t help but think about that. Of course, he must be worried about the director who couldn’t communicate well.

‘I didn’t want to say this, but.’

I swallowed.

Whatever.

I just had to suit the taste of the director.

“…I’ll make a PPT.”

“…!”

“By tomorrow morning.”

“…!!”

How else can we show our hard work and passion?

‘Is this how I get rewarded for going to college?’

I swallowed a sigh.

* * *

On that day, Park Moondae stayed up all night in the dorm. And the other members couldn’t sleep either.

It was because the loyalty and the conscience of putting off everything to the speaker woke them up.

Thanks to this, the presentation material became a picture that everyone made together.

“What should I look for?”

“I’ll write it down here.”

“I like this image! It’s perfect!”

However, the person who proposed the overnight PPT production was not very happy.

‘If there are too many boatmen, the boat will go up the mountain.’

(TL notes: It’s a Korean proverb meaning ‘if too many people are involved in a task, it will not be done well’.)

Park Moondae was planning to show the completed version in the morning and receive feedback.

In the first place, this work didn’t need the help of 20-year-olds who had never made much presentation material.

‘Raebin does some data research, but it’s not like I can’t do that too, so it doesn’t matter.’

Plus, he also had some goals.

‘…I have done this much, but I wouldn’t be able to knock them down if they want to go with number 2.’

It was intended to fan out the mouths of number 2 voters, who had become a minority, with a sense of debt.

Seon Ahyeon was a representative example. He was a member who chose song number 2 purely because he liked it.

“M-Moondae. D-Do you want to drink this?”

However, Seon Ahyeon was the one struggling to help complete the PPT.

He was so passionate that he couldn’t possibly do it out of conscience alone.

“…?”

Park Moondae hesitated at the sense of disparities but eventually asked.

“Are you okay with this? I am doing this to push for number 7.”

Seon Ahyeon nodded vigorously.

“I-I thought a lot about it and decided. N-Number. 2… Um, N-Next time, I’ll be greedy!”

“Um… thank you.”

“Huh, n-no! S-Since we’re all doing it together…!”

“…”

‘Why do I end up feeling a sense of debt?’

Park Moondae decided to be nicer to Seon Ahyeon.

“Where’s Cha Eugene?”

“He’s sleeping in the kitchen~”

Anyway, the night passed quickly.

And the morning when the sun came up.

“Good morning.”

Park Moondae and the members went into the company’s morning meeting with the PPT.

“How passionate.”

“Thank you.”

The director, who didn’t know the contents of the presentation yet, reacted favorably, saying that he liked the speed and attitude.

In the first place, they weren’t unknown rookies whose future was still uncertain, but a group that would become a golden goose, so it was just natural.

And five minutes later.

The director was extremely bewildered.

“Director, I heard that the baseball club concept was created by taking references from cartoons.”

“Right.”

“Certainly, when it comes to school-related cartoons, sports seem to be the trend.”

“Hm-mm.”

“And one more thing, there’s a genre that’s steadily on par with sports in school cartoons.”

“Oh~ What is it?”

Park Moondae turned over the PPT slide screen.

A magic wand floated across the screen.

“It’s the magical girl.”

“…?!”

The meeting room plunged into a whirlwind of confusion.

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CHAPTER 68

“…”

There was a moment of deceptive silence.

The director asked as if he had heard a random joke.

“…Magical Girl? You mean like what the kids watch? Like Luna Moon?”

“Yes.”

Park Moondae quickly cleared up the situation before the director became displeased.

Thud.

“Of course, I don’t really mean Magical Girls for toddlers.”

As the PPT went over one more slide, they could see cuts of props in dreamy colors.

A classroom window glittering in the glow of the sunset.

The sky wallpaper on a cracked phone.

Classroom clock with purple effect.

……

“However, if only the symbolic motive of the genre is reconstructed, it can compete well enough. The retro sentiment is trendy these days, so it’s also a

choice that can capture both popularity and batting eyes.”

(TL notes: batting eyes = the ability to distinguish between a ball and a strike in baseball.)

“…Hmm.”

Park Moondae posted some examples of retro marketing in several PPTs. Among them, there was a viral SNS conducted by T1, the parent company of the agency.

“Also, if the song’s dreamy atmosphere and the keywords ‘Youth’ and ‘Magic’ are combined, I think we can bring out the artistry with the composition of art films.”

Art.

He poked at the weak part of high-ranking people like the director.

When the director talked about self-produced idols, Park Moondae noticed the image he expected from the agency’s business.

‘He wants to look good, so he has no choice but to do it well.’

Since he talked about popularity a lot in front of them, Park Moondae also made enough excuses for the commercial.

“Related image references and arrangement plans.”

Park Moondae turned over the PPT slide and showed additional image data he had selected with the members.

And lastly, he briefly played song number 7.

It was the chorus part.

However, it felt different from the demo.

“…!”

“We want to proceed with the overall arrangement in this direction.”

Kim Raebin, who was standing together and looking at the presentation materials, nodded slightly.

The rest of the members were slightly relieved because it gave a strange comfort to see the person who led the arrangement being satisfied.

‘I couldn’t sleep a wink because of that.’

It was fortunate for them that Ryu Chungwoo had a car and a driver’s license. They were able to go to the studio just by texting the manager.

Of course, the manager who woke up in the morning and saw the text had freaked out.

“Oh…”

The director gave a strange exclamation and soon nodded his head.

And he clapped.

“Oh, I definitely need to have friends who are young and talented. In just one day! You even prepared a presentation~”

‘I guess he likes it.’

Park Moondae held back a snort.

The director shouted compliments to the staff, saying, ‘They seem to be better than the kids who joined the company these days’, and finally got to the point.

“Okay~ Let’s proceed like this.”

“Thank you!”

“Oh, I’m okay with this because it’s me. Other directors, those old people don’t know much about these things~”

Looking at the director who was showing off, Park Moondae smiled as sincerely as possible.

It was the vibe of dealing with a professor.

By the way, the members who saw that scene were exchanging glances behind, saying, ‘You want to go with number 7 that much?’

“Right. Director, I believe you so there’s one more thing I want to tell you.”

“What is it?”

Park Moondae turned over one more slide on the PPT that the director thought was over.

“It’s the opinion on the song that the company gave us.”

“…?”

“Ah, we really like the concept of a baseball club. Isn’t that right?”

“Of course!”

“I really want to try it.”

“I heard it’s the director who decided it. Thank you!”

Park Moondae and the members eagerly exchanged responses that were already planned.

‘Let’s finish it before the company staff come to their senses.’

“So to make it more like a traditional baseball club, why don’t we add another genre instead of disco?”

“W-What?

Park Moondae smiled faintly.

“How about using Rock?”

* * *

Two weeks before Testar’s debut date which was officially approved by the agency.

An article was posted on the portal site.

[<Idol Inc.>’s Testar debuts on June 18]

[Big rookie Testas from the audition, the countdown to debut]

[Testar (TeSTAR) appears… music upheaval in June]

The debut was set about five days later than previously stated, but the fans were still enthusiastic.

Because there had been no news for the past two weeks.

– Ah, finally

– Something must have been going on. Phew…

– There are 20 days left. I can finally wait in peace.

– Nothing has been posted on the kids’ SNS besides the first post Guys, I wish you’re doing well! You’re all busy preparing for the album, right?

– The reality show schedule has been set. I hope the trailer will be released soon

Some fans were slightly concerned about the overlapping schedule with VTIC, but they couldn’t say the debut date that had already been announced should be delayed so they were satisfied with reality.

– The kids will love it There are quite a few members who said they respected VTIC, right?

– It’s not going to be released at the same time. It’s going to be a week apart, so it’ll be okay.

– I’ll be able to see Moon Puppy with Cheongryeo-nim again

└Just thinking about it makes me happy

Fans used this piece of news as hot content and talked about this and that.

It wasn’t that there weren’t fans who expressed dissatisfaction, but the general reaction was to wait and see.

And a week later.

Less than two weeks left until the comeback.

– Why isn’t anything coming out?

People exploded.

– Is the agency actually working?

– It’s time for the teaser image to come out, but why isn’t it showing up on their SNS?

– How come there isn’t any content? It doesn’t make sense

– You didn’t publish the articles and put the kids on an island, did you?;;; No eyewitnesses

– You’re not going to leave the kids neglected and run away with the company’s investment, I won’t let you go

Terrifying clouds of war hung in the air as if a statement would be announced at any moment. The website of the agency, which was made hastily, was already inaccessible due to traffic overload.

On the day the LAN cable was about to be torn apart due to the explosion of anger.

– CCCrazy something has come out (link)

The teaser was released at midnight that night.

* * *

[TeSTAR (Testar) ‘Magical Boy’ Official Teaser]

“…”

On the thumbnail, there were two hands outstretched to the sky. The sky with a subtle mixture of yellow and purple stood out.

But when the play button was clicked, a black screen suddenly popped up.

Click.

The English narration was accompanied by subtitles.

[As a child, I always went home before sunset.]

[There was no moonlit night in that daily life.]

[And now.]

[Looking out the window from inside the classroom.]

[The sun was setting.]

Screech- Click.

The sound of a film being played could be heard.

At that moment, the sunset sky filled the screen.

Golden and purple and red sunlight crashed into each other.

A music box rang.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

The two note scales soaked the screen like water droplets and colored it dreamily.

Suddenly, the camera started to move back. A white border surrounded the fantastically colored sky.

It was a window frame with fluttering curtains.

Then, on the window frame, a figure could be seen sleeping.

[…]

Back view of a dark-haired boy in a white summer school uniform.

There were old gloves and baseballs scattered around.

The boy tossed and turned, slightly. The light of the sunset poured in.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

The moment the boy's white school uniform turned pink in the sunset.

The fluttering curtains seemed to unfold wide, and then they shone white and shattered down like crystals.

Psssh…

The transparent crystal fragments poured down on the boy's back, shooting a purple sunset in all directions.

It was a feast of enchanting colors.

And.

The screen turned black.

[Magical Boy]

[06.18. 00 : 00]

"…"

A short 30-second video, that was it.

However, the terrifying number of views proved the reaction.

[View count: 5,191,045]

It was crazy.

It even took less than a day to reach three million.

Considering that Testar had no overseas base, it was stunning.

“What do you think?”

“P-People… they like it?”

I nodded.

“Yes.”

“T-Thank goodness…!”

Ahead of their debut, several members who were detoxing on the internet for their mental state sat down on the floor

The tension eased, and the fatigue seemed to darken their eyes.

‘It’s understandable.’

To be honest, if the response was not good, my mental state would have melted.

Because I’d been working like a cow with insomnia for 25 days now.

‘…Still, the date is close.’

In fact, the teaser was supposed to be released later. Because the ‘Magical Boy’ music video hadn’t been edited yet.

However, if we delayed it any longer, people who waited for us would probably vomit blood due to stress, so everyone tried to speed it up somehow.

‘It seemed the agency finally got scared.’

Anyway, the response was overwhelming… It was great.

– What's with the crazy quality

– How in the world did they come up with a concept like this;; I am really perplexed, tell me their bank account number

– Guys, it's already fun. It's already a great song

– What's this? Magical boy? You are my magic… Argh

– That's why there hasn't been any news, they were making something like this… Then it can't be helped. Okay, I understand

– My wallet belongs to Testar. It's reserved.

None of the scratching comments from fans were noticeable. It meant that the review was good enough that all dislikes were pushed away.

The teaser came out well too in my opinion.

The part of the song to be revealed was picked well, and the directing was appropriate.

'It was also a good choice to make it difficult to know who appeared since only the back side was shown.'

I didn't know what would happen if they picked out just one person to be in the teaser from a group that debuted in a survival show.

And above all, the visual beauty that the capital was poured into was excellent.

'I think people's expectations have grown too high… Since the song is good, I'm sure we can cover it.'

Additional contents would continue to appear in a few days, so fans wouldn’t have to worry.

“…Guys, let’s get up and get ready again.”

“Yes…”

At Ryu Chungwoo’s tired voice, the members lifted themselves up like zombies.

I also put my smartphone aside and joined.

“Great job. Now the music video… It’s over after we shoot this song.”

“Wow…”

“The schedule will return focusing on dance practice.”

“…”

There was no forced march more hellish than this.

“Yes!”

In the terrible silence, only Cha Eugene’s answer echoed excitedly.

Then, the staff approached.

“We’re done setting up~”

“Yes!”

The filming of the second music video was slowly coming to an end.

In fact, considering that we usually start filming at least a month in advance, there was no crazier schedule than this.

‘…It means that everyone involved stays up all night to finalize this.’

For reference, the director who filmed ‘Magical Boy’ also filmed this.

‘This company, the staff are definitely doing a good job.’

No matter where they got the music video director from, they quickly recruited a new, famous director. It was probably intercepted in the middle through personal connections.

It was a move of experienced people who ambitiously gathered in T1.

The problem was that we didn’t know when the ticking time bomb in the form of the director who only had the motivation and the incoherent system of the company would explode.

In particular, I would like the superiors who had been blinded by the media’s brainwashing ‘Testar’s agency is here’ and hit me with articles such as debuting within a month to quit immediately.

…Let’s erase this from my head for now.

I had to work, but I was just so stressed out.

“Have you guys familiarized yourself with your parts in the filming?”

“I didn’t have anything in particular to be familiar with.”

“Me, too!”

“Ah, right~ We didn’t have anything in particular. Sejin hyung-nim must be having a hard time?”

“…Not really.”

Lee Sejin replied bluntly but did not seem uncooperative.

Somehow, both of the music videos we filmed had storylines, so we decided to make good use of his background as a child actor.

‘Hmm, it wouldn’t be a bad idea to make work him harder.’

I talked to Lee Sejin.

“Actually, I was kind of impressed when I saw it… You were really good.”

“…”

It wasn’t completely empty talk. We definitely didn’t have time left. Among us, he was the only one that didn’t look amateurish in unedited cuts.

“I understand how Moondae feels. He’s embarrassed that only the back of his head is shown alone in the teaser~”

The nonsense came back from the wrong guy.

When I turned around, Keun Sejin quickly averted his eyes and looked away. That bastard is really…

“…I was going to make a living from it, so I have to do it well.”

“Yes?”

Lee Sejin did not answer further. He just followed the staff with a slightly sunken face.

‘You’re like that even if I complimented you.’

I held back my sigh. Being annoyed was just a waste of energy.

“Okay, let’s start with the group dance scene~”

“Yes!”

I set my posture according to the choreography formation and reorganized the schedule in my head.

Originally, the concept photo should have appeared first, but the schedule was delayed due to the release of the teaser video, so it was planned to be released around the time the album was released.

‘Then maybe… the reality show will be cleared up first.’

In fact, I thought the video trailer would be released last week at the latest, but it was still very late. There were only a few days left until the show aired.

And, as expected, the reality show trailer came out that night.

[Testar’s ‘Living Together’ TEST]

[Revealed on Friday, June 8th at 7 pm!]

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CHAPTER 69

‘Today has finally come.’

Park Moondae’s first homma stared at the monitor, cracking her fingers.

Today was the day the first episode of the reality show aired.

There was still a record of her being excited with her friend in the group talk because of the scene in the trailer released a few days ago.

– Moondae is cooking!

– Moondae is playing a game!

– Gyaaah!!

…The video clips that were thrown in while they were suffering from a chronic lack of content were no different from drugs.

She had watched the cutely edited short trailer so many times that she almost memorized all the contents.

And now, she was finally about to watch the full video!

‘It’s starting…!’

She rubbed her hands together when the ‘For 12-year-olds’ sign came out. The teaser streaming that she had played for the record of the number of views was temporarily suspended and she stared at the screen with a disciplined attitude.

[Honored debut!]

The program began by introducing Testar’s situation, briefly showing the final moments in the last episode of <Idol Inc.> and various media reactions.

[TeSTAR is finally formed]

[Where are they?]

Meaningful captions.

And what came right after…

[Uaaah!!]

[Let’s do it one more time!]

[U-Uh…]

It was the figures of Testar members who were overly immersed in board games.

-

– You’ve been doing well, noona is relieved!

– Looks like a lot of fun

It was as people said on SNS, Testar looked very happy.

Fans were happy to see them look comfortable outside of the audition.

[Testar, why… are you playing the game so seriously…?]

With a humorous caption, the screen changed.

[<202■May■■Day 9 AM>]

[Wow!!]

[I love this place!]

Testar was seen entering the dorm noisily.

The editing and effort of the members to look bright and excited shined through, making them look like a pack of puppies.

‘What about Moondae?’

Park Moondae was not running around, but he was looking around the house with his eyes wide open. What he was wearing was the yellow hoodie that she had seen in Testar’s first photo on SNS.

‘It’s even cuter watching it in a moving image…!’

While she was moved, other viewers were also busy talking about the plain clothes.

– I finally see the kids wearing what they want in high-definition Is this the taste of debut!

– Their preferred style is exposed

– Ah, everyone is predictable, only Moondae sticks out

┗I know, according to eyewitnesses, he only wore t-shirts every day, but for some reason, he’s wearing such cute clothes

┗He had worn a Welsh Corgi doll mask too. He’s serious about his character…

┗It’s so true

└As expected, he mysteriously works hard

And on the screen, the scene of the Testar members receiving a mission card from the robot vacuum cleaner began to be broadcasted.

[Clear the mission so that you can become a true group!]

[Ah.]

[Ah… Mission.]

After that, the figures of the passing participants overreacting to each element reminiscent of <Idol Inc.> and being slightly depressed was used as a good gag element.

– Aah

– What should I do

– Guys, actually, we all suffer from Idol Inc PTSD…

– The program is really sinful, now that Testar has come out, get rid of it now!

– I hope there’s next season of Testar reality show every year

Viewers laughed but sympathized.

And they burst into laughter again when they saw the members change their attitude due to being overly immersed in the game during the roommate mission.

[Please, just once!]

[I want to win!]

–

– What should I do with the kids’ competitive spirit

– This is kind of… Could it be an occupational disease… They couldn’t break Idol Inc’s habit of working to death.

└I think this is correct

And the fact that the most immersed person and the most calm person came in first and second place side by side also became a fun element.

[Yeaaah! I won!]

[…Um, congratulations.]

The calm appearance of Park Moondae, who seemed bemused by Cha Eugene’s loud ceremony, made the contrast even more hilarious as it reminded them of the team match between the two.

– Moon Puppy looks like a Tibetan fox again

– The two of them are so different, but since they’re on the same team, it’s so much fun. Please continue being close, guys

– First and second place exchanged their rankings and became first and second place again

– Cha Yu is very lucky and Moon Puppy seems to be good at games?

However, the reaction faded slightly at the roommate’s result.

This was because the combinations that they had never really thought about or hoped for came true.

– Oh

– It ended up like this

– I hope they’re doing well

– The roommate won’t stay like this until the end, they’ll change it again, right?

However, most of the reaction was recovered in the scene of making dinner.

It was because the grocery shopping team, which excitedly ran through the mart and picked up goods, and the cooking team, which made jjimdak in harmony, were both cute.

In particular, Park Moondae and Seon Ahyeon pulled out their portions with unexpected cooking skills.

[I think it would be better to start by trimming the ingredients first. I’m going to prepare the chicken, is that okay?]

As soon as the cooking materials arrived, Park Moondae distributed the work in an instant and took on the most difficult task himself.

It was purely because he couldn’t trust the other members, but on the screen, he looked quite reliable.

And Seon Ahyeon somehow looked like he was good at cooking but he mercilessly messed it all up, taking his portion with a very embarrassed look.

[S-Sorry…]

[You have nothing to apologize for.]

Park Moondae looked alternately between the miserable onion and the kitchen knife that almost cut Seon Ahyeon’s hand and gave the depressed Seon Ahyeon a new job.

[With this… Can you set up the table over there?]

[Y-Yes!]

Seon Ahyeon on the screen instantly brightened with a bright effect. And of course, the fans were amused.

– Moondae is good at cooking?;; I'm flustered

– Aigoo, Ahyeon

– Guys, let's not leave Ahyeon with a kitchen knife (alone) from now on. I think he's going to get hurt

-Moondae is good at taking care of people? Why did he come out like that at the beginning of Idol Inc…

└I think this is the question of every Park Moondae's fans

The scene of their first meal at the dorm, where they ate jjimdak and had a friendly conversation, was well-received as a typical image that fans expected from a reality show.

– The kids have big hands, they made a lot of jjimdak

– Everyone is eating well

– The kids seem to be closer than I thought. Is it a comradeship born out of captivation

– Let's be together for a long time, guys ♡

And the climax finally came up.

The group watching a horror movie.

[Hihihihihihi]

At the ghost’s face floating on the screen, the supermarket PB popcorn cut through the air.

[Ugh…]

[Ooh!!]

Thanks to the production crew who caught each member’s reaction, fans were able to happily build more characters of the members.

– Cha Eugene is laughing?

– No, the world’s Keun Sejin, is scared of ghosts! I thought he was such a socialite that even the ghost wouldn’t pay attention to him!

– Raebin, you’re going to tear your clothes

– Ryu Chungwoo-ssi, I didn’t see you like that, but you’re so dishonorable. You chose a horror movie because you’re not afraid!

And before Park Moondae’s cut came out, Park Moondae’s fans were all guessing.

Of course, Park Moondae can’t be scared!

– Looks like the Tibetan fox will come out again

– (Everyone seems scared. Horror movies are scary things.)

└

└It’s already cute

– I think he’s just eating popcorn and watching

But Moondae, who was the last to appear on the screen…

He was eating popcorn with his eyes down.

And every time he heard a ghost, the popcorn bucket jumped sporadically.

[Guuuuuuurgh…]

[(Popcorn acrobatics)]

Still, Park Moondae firmly didn’t turn his attention to the movie.

Comments flooded in.

-…?

– ?!??

– Scared… He’s scared!

– Oh my gosh

– I must be losing it, he’s so cute

Fans were completely excited by the agitation of Park Moondae, who always appeared calm on broadcasts whether he stayed up all night for a week or won first place in the final.

– Wow, he can’t look at the screen until the end Ehehe look at him pretending he can

– He’s eaten all the popcorn, but he keeps holding onto the empty bucket! He can’t let go because he’s so scared!

– He’d wake up when the movie had turned off

– The other kids didn’t notice? Did Moondae think he’d look natural in front of the camera?

Park Moondae’s homma who was watching the screen couldn’t hold back and sent a message to her friend.

[Aah]

[Moondae is good at cooking]

[He’s good at board games]

[But he can’t watch horror movies Crazy, he’s so cute that I want to break down my apartment]

There were a series of typos because she kept her eyes fixed on the screen while typing the message, but that was what she wanted to say.

[7 members, 7 colors]

[Testar is getting to know each other from scratch]

[What will happen tomorrow?]

The first episode of the reality show ended with the horror movie part that brought joy to all the fans of each member.

“…Ah.”

Come to think of it, it had already been an hour.

As she regretted it, the commercial break ended and a trailer was shown.

[We are now in the studio~]

The figure of the Testar exchanging discussions in a music studio with a soundproof booth.

And…

[Right now… We're on our way to give a presentation.]

It was the figures of the members wearing neat clothes and entering the meeting room.

"Gasp."

There must be a lot of footage related to the album!

She already wanted to see the next episode.

She hurriedly turned on SNS. She wanted to share this overflowing feeling.

– Honestly, I expected it to be boring, but it was really fun

– Where did all the guys who said the kids would be awkward with each other go hiding? They seemed close and content?

– Ah, in the trailer, it's great that the story related to the debut is being released. I feel relieved

– Wow, no way, was it the members who choose the new concept? Is this because of Idol Inc's experience, too?

She could relate to every word that showed up in her timeline feed.

She was about to press the write button with a happy smile when she saw an article pop up on the newly updated timeline.

[Ah… I'm going crazy (link) (screenshot)]

“Huh?”

The link was a portal site news address.

And the screenshot… It was from that article.

“…!”

As soon as she read the contents, her heart felt as if iyt had been hit by cold water.

[The unfair contract of <Idol Inc.>’s Testar was revealed in a lawsuit]

: The former agency (Dream K) of Lee Sejin (22), a member of TeSTAR who debuted through Idol Inc

According to Dream K’s claim, Tnet forcibly requested the participation of artists from multiple agencies in order to recruit participants for <Re-listed! Idol Inc.>, which aired last January, and when a participant debuted through the program, they were forced to sign an unfair contract in which the artist’s affiliation was transferred to Tnet.

……

She swallowed and clicked on the article.

* * *

In the middle of the night, past midnight.

A cold atmosphere broke out at the dorm.

“…Let’s sort it out.”

“…”

“So, Sejin’s former agency… They’re asking for their artist back.”

Ryu Chungwoo calmly sorted out the situation.

I held back a sigh.

‘It was something that could explode any time.’

In the first place, it was unreasonable to push through a contract stating that any participants who debuted with Idol Inc. would belong to them.

They must have made it that way because they couldn’t resist the greed of having a long-lived group created by the audition.

‘Still, if possible, can’t you pay twice for the double affiliation?’

It seemed there was hardly any stealing in this industry.

Since they couldn’t fight the broadcasting station, the agency would have lost anyway, but this season of <Idol Inc.> went so well that one thing exploded in the end.

‘Perhaps… Complaints had already piled up since the ‘Casting Call’ content, where the broadcaster proposed to change the agency at will.’

Besides, they could use Lee Sejin as an actor alone, so it was understandable that they regretted it.

Even if they couldn’t, they must at least want to receive their share of his Testar activities.

“…”

Lee Sejin didn’t answer even in the confrontation that lasted for quite a long time. He just sat on the sofa with his head down.

Keun Sejin urged with a smile.

“Hyung, let’s talk~”

At first, he coaxed him gently, but his tone gradually changed as if he couldn’t stand it anymore.

“Keun Sejin.”

“We need to get this sorted out quickly. You know there’s a week left until the date of our debut, right? We don’t have time~”

“…”

“If hyung-nim doesn’t clear up his position now, other agencies can do the same and talk about lawsuits, right?”

Keun Sejin was still smiling his usual smile, but his words got faster and faster.

“If we stay still, it won’t end with hyung alone, it might harm other members too, you know? Whether you leave or not, hurry up and talk to your agency now.”

‘This one is also having a mental breakdown.’

I clicked my tongue.

Come to think of it, Keun Sejin’s agency could have joined the lawsuit filed by Lee Sejin’s agency after taking a look.

He barely passed the audition and was about to make his debut; just thinking of going through that situation seemed to make Keun Sejin’s blood rising upside down.

“…”

However, instead of opening his mouth, Lee Sejin got up and ran away.

“…!”

“Hey.”

Bang.

Then he went into his room and shut the door.

‘…Are you kidding me?’

It’s your own business, but you’re avoiding it one-dimensionally like this.

At this point, even I who hadn’t thought much of it was starting to get annoyed. It’s not just once or twice this happened, what are you doing?

‘…In any case, I’ll have to open that door if I want to sleep tonight.’

I approached the room and struck the locked doorknob from above.

Thud.

It was a doorknob used at home, so it just opened. There were benefits to working out.

“…!”

“I’m going in.”

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CHAPTER 70

When I opened the locked door and walked into the room, Lee Sejin, who was sitting gloomily on his bed, freaked out.

“Urgh…!”

“Calm down.”

I sat on the opposite bed. Ryu Chungwoo and Keun Sejin, who I thought would follow immediately, were nowhere to be seen.

‘…I guess they courteously leave us alone.’

If it was just those two, it should be fine.

Well, it was fine. Anyway, since Lee Sejin was like this, I couldn’t sleep right away, so let’s hear what he thinks.

‘I wish I had a drink.’

There was no way that there would be such a thing in the dorm of an idol group that was about to be launched. Thinking it was such a pity, I just spoke out.

“Hyung, you know that you’re going to have an interview with the company tomorrow morning or early morning anyway.”

“…!”

“If that’s the case, wouldn’t it be better to just relax and organize your thoughts here? It is not a situation that can be avoided by avoiding it.”

As I wondered whether the characteristic ‘I heard it’s true’ didn’t pop out this time, Lee Sejin spoke only after a while.

“…I don’t know.”

“What is it that you don’t know.”

“What I want to do…”

“…?”

Isn’t it too late to worry about your career now?

“Do you want to go back to your former agency and continue acting?”

“…I don’t want to go back.”

“So you’re saying you want to act?”

“…Isn’t that obvious?”

Lee Sejin buried his face in his palms.

“I never thought about becoming an idol in the first place…”

“…”

This somehow reminds me of when something went wrong…?

I clicked my tongue.

‘I guess you didn’t participate in the audition out of your own will.’

“I guess you participated in <Idol Inc.> because of your former agency.”

“…That’s right. I took a long break… I had to do something like that because I just joined in.”

“Um.”

I said nonchalantly.

“For that kind of reason, you seemed to be working hard.”

“…Even if I didn’t have to work hard. I couldn’t be like that.”

Lee Sejin flared up a little.

‘Hmm, it felt different from that.’

I remembered what he said to me in the final.

– You’re debuting, so it’s not over for you, is that what you mean?… It must be nice

Doesn’t that mean you want to continue? In addition, the change in Lee Sejin’s status window was also noticeable.

‘There is no F anymore.’

Lee Sejin’s dance stat, which was F at the beginning of filming, had now risen to D+.

It was never a growth that could be achieved if it had been done without any special interest.

So I got a rough idea.

“It was actually fun.”

“…!”

“It was fun, so you worked harder without realizing it.”

Lee Sejin kept his mouth shut. He couldn’t deny it.

“That’s right… It felt good being on stage. I thought I would like to continue. But acting, too… I want to continue it.”

“…? Do it.”

“What?”

I don’t know why you are worried about this.

“In a couple of years, the agency will probably insert individual activities. Postpone it. If you serve out for five years, there will be the season of contract renewal, so if you want to stop being an idol, you just have to continue acting.”

Lee Sejin, who had been listening with his mouth open for a while, soon lowered his head with a bitter smile.

“…I can’t.”

“Yes?”

“You don’t know what my former agency is like.”

“…”

Well, I didn’t know. Learning that kind of stuff wasn’t my thing.

Lee Sejin seemed to have given up halfway, moving up the situation.

“Dream K, over there… It’s not a decent agency. If I stay here like this, I don’t know what will explode out of their resentment.”

“Do you have any weaknesses?”

If drugs came out here, I would go ahead and recommend withdrawal.

Fortunately, Lee Sejin frowned.

“I didn’t lead that sort of careless life… I mean they will blow it up in the form of plausible tabloid gossip.”

According to the explanation that followed, it seemed there were already several actors who had been sent off that way because they didn’t renew their contracts.

When the contract renewal season came, they deliberately released rumors to lower the ransom.

‘Isn’t it just like a picture of a bad company?’

“Um, Is there a line-up of rumors that you can predict??”

“Mine is obvious… First of all, the purpose of joining the audition was to make a comeback as an actor and they set the mood by saying that I didn’t even want to be an idol.”

“Hmm.”

“And then there was an affair… Well, anyway, they’ll release strange propaganda articles and since it’s not a crime, I can’t prove it.”

“Well, our investment destination is T1, so I don’t think you’ll leave just like that.”

“For now, their goal is to blow up the former agency first and set the mood. They’re making T1 cut me cut off.”

Lee Sejin murmured bitterly.

“At any rate… I was added at the last minute.”

“…”

“The public opinion about me on the Internet is not good right now. There are a lot of people asking to do it without me… Because I’m no good.”

“…Um.”

He must have looked it all up.

Certainly, that kind of talk had been circulating.

In other words, the group would be much better if we left out the person who was an additional passing participant, a former actor, and had the lowest skill.

I shrugged.

“That public opinion will weaken when we debut.”

“…It’s no use consoling me.”

“No, I am just stating the truth.”

“…What?”

“We are moving together with VTIC. It means that they’re uniting internally to keep that side in check right now.”

“…!!”

Originally, when a powerful enemy was formed outside, the inside was bound to unite.

“Besides, if hyung leaves, someone else will be the target. That’s how it is. So, I don’t think you should think about it.”

Wanting to get rid of someone who looked like the weakest was a common behavior in any group. This meant that it didn’t happen particularly because it was Lee Sejin.

Lee Sejin seemed a little teary-eyed, but he soon recovered and shook his head.

“Still… There is no way to stop my former agency right now. Just because I talk to the agency now doesn’t mean that I can block off the gossip at its source.”

“Then I guess you should do it yourself.”

“What?”

I crossed my arms.

“Hyung, you can spread it yourself beforehand.”

“…Beforehand?”

“You were forced to participate by your agency, and you post an article saying that you don’t want to go back because you’ve found your aptitude. Make sure to emphasize ‘force, forced’ by your former agency. Thanks to the audition, you escaped.”

“…!”

“Then even if gossip comes out, it won’t work well.”

My former agency is spreading rumors~In other words, creating an atmosphere that allowed the fans to defend him.

Once public opinion was turned around, the former agency would feel burdened to drag out the lawsuit, and then T1, who didn't want to give shares, would properly end it.

Lee Sejin was silent for a moment with his mouth open.

"…What have you been doing after you dropped out?"

"I joined the audition."

This repertoire didn't change. It was fortunate that the NIS topic didn't come out this time.

"Then let's talk like that with your former agency."

"…Okay."

Anyway, the situation was sorted out. Ryu Chungwoo would take care of the rest. I held back my sigh.

"…Should I post it on my SNS account?"

"Be sure to write it in your own handwriting."

* * *

After news of Lee Sejin's former agency, Dream K's lawsuit came out, the internet entertainment articles section was always filled with at least one related content.

In fact, since it was really an unfair contract, various reactions came out in connection with the issue of abuse of power at the broadcasting station.

– It's too much to take away someone who still has a remaining contract period. Keep the contract and they just need to manage the operation

– Then it’s a double settlement. The kids aren’t doing some kind of outsourcing service, so why should they do that;; It’s better for idols

– To be honest, the former agency didn’t do anything right, didn’t they even send him out to the audition? It’s obvious that they’re asking for a refund now that things are working well!

– In terms of cost, it’s true that the agency would it was unfair after training trainees and paying for this and that.

– Ah, I’m tired because of Lee Sejin. What is going on. Let’s just do it with six of them. Even without him, the quality of the stage and the atmosphere will help

In particular, there was a strong response from those who insisted on leaving out Lee Sejin.

– Oh really he’s not helping

– Our kids are doing well, but let’s pretend he’s an obstacle and take him out

– A week before their debut, what’s going on

– Who wants to see the face of the person who was forced to come to the audition and made a debut by chance? There’s no one, right?

– I couldn’t sleep, I cried and watched the stage. The actor didn’t look good on Testar so let’s take him out

With those words, Lee Sejin’s fans were hurt, and the vicious cycle was repeated.

And the next morning.

A new notification came from Testar’s SNS, which hadn’t happened since the first post.

Fans who clicked at the speed of light saw a post with a picture of a handwritten letter attached.

–…!

It was written by Lee Sejin.

[Hello. I’m Lee Sejin, a member of Testar]

: I’m writing this to convey my thoughts about the latest news and stories

Carefully written in neat handwriting, the content began with a story about his childhood life in the entertainment industry.

In summary, it meant that the former agency had overworked him tremendously.

[…Due to such an excessive schedule, I stopped acting as a child actor due to health problems. I think it was hard for a 12-year-old to handle a schedule where he couldn’t sleep 3 hours a day]

And it was said that as soon as he barely recovered and tried to take on a new challenge, he was forced to participate in the audition by his former agency.

[…I turned it down several times because I had never been on stage before. However, I participated in <Idol Inc.> under great pressure from explanations such as ‘If you don’t appear on this program, you won’t be able to work.’

And in the audition that he participated in.

Lee Sejin wrote that he found an unexpected joy there.

[I, who was passive regarding peer relationships, had so much fun making good friends and performing with them. Standing on that stage made me happy.

I didn’t expect it at all, but I really wanted to keep doing this. I became desperate.

And thankfully, that dream came true, and now it has become a very precious opportunity for me to debut with these good friends.]

Lee Sejin concluded the post by saying that he really wanted to debut as a Testar with these friends.

[I’m sorry I couldn’t deliver the first post with good news. In the next post, I will come back with news that can bring you happiness as a Testar member. Thank you for reading this long post]

Shortly after this article was posted, the public opinion of Testar fans, who were hardly favorable to Lee Sejin, revived.

–

– Sejin said he wanted to become an idol! Just let him do it

– No, where did the conscience of the former agency go, what a damn unfair thing to say to a 12-year-old Isn’t what you did unfair?

-T1 was right this time. And Dream K is a pig.

– To be honest, I also thought Sejin joined Testar so abruptly… Sometimes I wondered if he really wanted to do this I’m sorry

Those who had been his fans since he was a child actor were more heartbroken.

– It makes me sick to think of a 12-year-old smiling on TV even though he was having such a hard time…

– I thought Sejin's personality got calmer because he grew up a lot… Sigh…

– I want to see Sejin acting… But more importantly, I want to see Sejin do what he wants to do. First of all, he can't go back to his former agency.

And once public opinion snapped, people who enjoyed ostracizing Lee Sejin were pushed aside.

Of course, there were still a lot of sarcastic people, but for now, they had lost in numbers.

– Lee Sejin is also good with pity acts But I can't do it better than him, what should I do.

└You're doing better than having a life where you get mad at a 23-year-old and leave hate comments!

└ You nail it

– Lee Sejin saw idols are living well so he wanted to keep going – I feel sorry for the kids who were eliminated, it seems he'll make it to three years and then run away

└How could you interpret the accident so twistedly…

└Characteristics of these guys: In other posts, they sarcastically ridiculed those who were eliminated because they were pushed back by Lee Sejin

As fans of passing participants began to feel sympathy for Lee Sejin's post, Testar's individual fandom began to feel repulsed by hate comments about the incident.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Tnet seized Dream K with a few carrots and so many whips.

(TL notes: carrot and whip = a system of reward and punishment.)

The day when the articles quietly went down and were settled, the atmosphere of the fans was reversed.

As if to drive a wedge, another teaser was released at midnight.

However, this time it was not uploaded to the official Testar Wetube channel.

Instead, it was added as part of Tnet's Testar reality show.

[TeSTAR (Testar) 'Hi-five' Official Teaser]

'Is it a channel error?'

'It's not Magical Boy…?'

Fans thought so for a while, but they quickly clicked on the video.

"…!"

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CHAPTER 71

The new teaser video started with a cheerful voice.

– High five~

Against the backdrop of the blue sky and the ground that appeared to be a school playground, Cha Eugene waved his hands and shouted.

Behind Cha Eugene, the members could be seen in a choreography formation.

All of them were wearing striped baseball uniforms that fit perfectly. The members, who were warming up, danced the choreography in line with the chorus that suddenly started.

– This shot

Tang Tang Tang

It will fit correctly

– Yes heart

Pang Pang Pang

Like a fanfare!

– Just burst out!

It was an exciting choreography with big movements and finely divided beats.

When the chorus part was over, the screen froze with a final dance pose. It was the pose of stretching their feet toward the screen and turning around.

And after a while

[…Cut!]

[Ugh!]

At the director’s words, white captions appeared above the members sitting on the ground.

[‘Hi-five’ music video]

[Revealed for the first time in episode 2 of <Testar’s Living Together TEST>]

It was a humorous and dynamic teaser that contrasted with the first teaser of ‘Magical Boy’.

Of course, the number of comments increased in an instant.

– Crazy, two songs?

– Is this a pre-release? What should I do, I like this too

– No, you really picked funky beats for school

– Which of the two you’re going to like? By the way, I like both. It’s great, Testar.

└ You too? I am the same!

– I only heard the chorus, but I’m already getting the hang of it, I think the second music will win

└No, the Magical Boy choreography hasn’t even been released yet. Give them a fair chance!

– When the drumrolls came out, I thought they were hitting my heart as well; Ah, Testar is the human defibrillator!

The Internet was burning as people were getting excited, enough to overturn the gloomy incident just before.

Still, I was a little perplexed.

It worked so much better than I thought.

– No, did you go through training at your agency while cutting off the real news? You picked two songs, but both ended up being good?

– Even the concept is perfectly contrasted, but I guess it’s connected a bit;; Do you remember the glove and baseball in the Magical Boy teaser?

└Heol

└It’s amazing, really…

– Looking at the trailer for the 2nd episode of the reality show, it seems the kids took the initiative in participating, but I’m already looking forward to it.

– Let’s go for 500,000 albums for their debut album!

And this reaction exploded once more the moment the second episode of the reality show came out.

[Related image references and arrangement plans.]

Because the members preparing the presentation materials within a day were broadcasted.

Since the broadcast was well-connected to the people at the front and the back, any mention of the director’s irrationality and the simultaneous release with VTIC were all cut off.

Instead, the image of Testar passionately pursuing the title track was reflected well.

– No, why are the kids so good at their work;;

– I couldn’t even imagine. Did you choose all the songs by yourself and come up with a concept?

– Besides, no one is fighting and they’re on good terms! They have different opinions, but they’re trying to persuade each other!

-Testar’s blissful group project comes true…

Of course, doubtful people also came out.

– A rookie did this? It’s all directing. Don’t be fooled~

– Everything’s already been decided. The portion was picked out as if it was the idols who publicize it. Don’t trust the script!

┗I guess your favorite idol can’t do anything by themselves, what should we do

┗I know, right… Cheer up!

However, fans whose deal meter had exploded ignored them all, leaving only one or two words. They didn’t even care much.

(TL notes: deal meter = a program that sums up the number of damages inflicted on enemies in games.)

It was because the feeling that things would go well had already prevailed.

-This will definitely succeed.

– The popularity index is already skycrocketing Even if it’s a teaser scam, I think it will be fine

– Will the music video appear at the end of the broadcast?

The second episode of the reality show was more like a production journal. However, the scene with the claw machine was added at the end for a bit of entertainment.

It was a cut that had been omitted to bring the scene of the horror movie into one episode.

It mainly captured the image of the members who failed to pick dolls and won mentally in a cute way.

[He’s right. The machine is weird.]

–

– Ah Keun Sejin is so funny!

The second episode ended with Lee Sejin picking out a puppy doll from the claw machine.

And when the music video preview subtitles appeared, the atmosphere heated up again with tension.

– It’s starting.

– The music video is coming out!

The moment the commercial break ended.

The screen turned into a sunny classroom window.

* * *

“The music video is coming out.”

“W-Wait a minute.”

Seon Ahyeon slipped into the living room. And at the same time, the commercial break ended.

‘Good timing.’

I focused my eyes on the screen.

In the first scene, Park Moondae… So, it started with a cut of me looking out the window. It was a bright blue sky.

And a notice paper was shoved to Park Moondae’s face.

[Sports competition]

[School baseball game]

The person who handed out the notice was Lee Sejin.

His usual unfriendly appearance was nowhere to be found and he looked like a nervous model student.

As soon as Park Moondae looked into the notice and snooped around, the prelude began.

Swish!

The song started with a cheerful whistling melody.

A modified disco that eliminated the clutter of the upbeat drum and used a rock sound with an electric guitar… Honestly, I didn’t know, but it was

exciting.

It was a relief that once I went as Kim Raebin recommended, the existing cheap atmosphere completely disappeared.

However… Due to time issues, I couldn’t change the lyrics.

-OH While thinking and thinking

I made up my mind Um~

Today I will throw

You will throw me away

Yes, heart~ Shot Shot!

…It was enough said.

“The choreography fits well.”

“Eugene is flying around?”

“Hehe.”

As soon as the group choreography cut came out, the members threw out one word at a time.

Perhaps they were conscious of the reality show camera installed to select the music video reaction content.

‘In the first place, I’ve seen the storyboard, so there’s nothing particular to be surprised about.’

On the screen, the story was developing with choreography cuts in between.

To summarize, it was about model student Lee Sejin gathering kids from his class to participate in a baseball game to fill in the school record.

As he gathered those who didn't participate in the sports competition, he ended up gathering all kinds of weirdos and unique characters… Well, that was the story.

"Moondae is in the book club!"

"I-It suits you."

I was given a role where I mostly read books or e-books.

– You have to give it a mysterious feeling. You know it, right?

The director emphasized that, but honestly, I didn't know about being mysterious… It just came out looking like they didn't know what I was thinking.

Next up was Seon Ahyeon. As you might have guessed… he was in the dance club.

"You're really good."

"You have the skill befitting of a dance major."

"T-Thank you……"

Seon Ahyeon, who worked hard on modern dance on the screen, was definitely impressive. It was clear that he couldn't immediately refuse and was suddenly taken away to play baseball.

Next up was Ryu Chungwoo.

"As expected of the national team!"

“Everyone! He actually shot that and got it right!”

“Haha, my posture got better after practicing.”

There was a scene where he was cast playing archery, but of course, it wasn’t awkward at all. Because he was not an amateur.

And next… Cha Eugene and Kim Raebin appeared together.

A little skit was inserted.

First of all, Lee Sejin vigorously opened the door to the sports warehouse.

Screech!

Then, he saw Kim Raebin and Cha Eugene, who were hanging out in the warehouse.

The two men, who looked like gangsters to anyone watching, stared at Lee Sejin who opened the door.

[…]

[…]

[…I’m sorry!]

Screech!

The door that had been opened was quickly closed again.

“Hahaha!”

“Sniff, it came out well.”

The guys watching the music video burst into laughter.

Honestly, it was funny to me, too.

‘It must be funnier because those roles were given to the youngest two.’

By the way, they decided on the characters they played on their own.

‘I want to experience life at the top of peer relationships hierarchy in my work… He said that.’

When I thought of Kim Raebin’s elaborate remarks, Cha Eugene’s bright remark also came to mind.

– It’s fun!

In any case, neither of them gave a good impression, but they did a frighteningly good job.

At last… Keun Sejin, who was in the election for the student council president, was recruited on the condition of running a campaign.

“Experienced people are different.”

“Ah, I would have been elected in that world~”

Keun Sejin said slyly and smiled.

‘You chose it on purpose.’

It seemed he chose that character from the music video and cover that side of the story because of the topic of the student council election that came up during the rumors of school bullying

Anyway, the music video ended with a humorous ending in which the ragtag team somehow managed to beat other schools in the sports competition.

For your information, Lee Sejin’s purpose–the school record–entered like a post-credit scene at the end and saved a slight twist.

“Wow!”

“It was fun until the end!”

There were no interruptions that made it hard to understand, and the story didn’t come out enough to be boring, so it gave just perfect fun. The arrangement with the group choreography cut seemed appropriate.

“Thank you for your hard work hard!

“Good job!”

First of all, words of relief poured out here and there with the joy that one music video was safely released.

And Ryu Chungwoo hinted, as if on purpose.

“Especially… Sejin, thank you.”

“…!”

“That’s right. Thanks to Sejin hyung-nim, even we, the amateurs, came out naturally.”

“Gasp, Raebin-ssi. These hyungs looked like amateurs…”

“N-No, it’s not like that…”

Let’s skip the fact that Kim Raebin is being caught by Keun Sejin’s words again.

“…”

Lee Sejin bit his lips but soon nodded.

And he added a little.

“…No, everyone did a great job. And… I’m sorry if I had a terrible attitude at that time.”

“N-No…”

“From now on… I won’t avoid it like this. I’ll get my act together.”

Lee Sejin clenched both of his hands tightly.

‘I guess you’ve come to your senses after turning off the urgent fire.’

It seemed he had looked back on the situation over the past few days.

“I-It’s all right! H-H-Hyung, thank you for your hard work…”

“You’re debuting now. It’s natural to go through trial and error.”

“Cheer up!”

“…Thank you.”

The atmosphere was warm again thanks to accepting the low hurdles.

After Lee Sejin’s affair broke out, the slightly awkward atmosphere that had been going on for several days seemed to have disappeared thanks to the music video.

That didn’t mean that we suddenly became closer and friendlier than regular co-workers.

“Fighting~”

For example, Keun Sejin who was smiling over there still didn’t seem fond of Lee Sejin, but… It was strange for seven strangers that stayed together to like everyone.

As long as we didn’t fight, it was fine.

‘This atmosphere will come out well in the reality show.’

The apology would be edited on its own.

I stretched, turning my shoulders. At that moment, Ryu Chungwoo spoke softly.

“Then, let’s go back to the practice room.”

“…”

“…Yes!”

Even that Cha Eugene answered late.

Everyone was already tired of practicing because of the forced march, but they knew that they couldn’t sleep like this.

Because there were only three days left until the debut showcase…

“Let’s cheer up, there’s not much time left.”

“Of course…”

“F-Fighting!”

After a few meaningless chants, it was confirmed that we would practice almost all night that day.

“…”

I hope there would be more fans coming to the showcase, not the reporters… I thought that would be comforting at least.

“Hey.”

“Yes?”

Lee Sejin talked to me while I was pressing my eyelids. When I turned my head out of courtesy, I heard a small murmur.

“Thank you for putting up with me.”

“…?”

Is it about the room?

I was so tired that I couldn’t think straight for a while.

I immediately thought of a recent example that might fit better than that.

“Ah, the handwritten letter?”

“…Right!”

Lee Sejin shouted out loud, then took a deep breath and calmed himself down.

“…Thanks to you, it ended well. I’ll pay you back.”

“Yes… Well, you don’t have to worry too much about it.”

In fact, it was just a quick summary of what anyone would pick out if they woke up and wrote them down. We hadn’t had time.

So the favor was over, all he had to was to stop the drug scandal.

Well… In fact, the drug scandal also seemed to be a problem related to the former agency.

'…That's how it is, but don't tell me something else will come out.'

It's not like I got hit in the back of my head just once or twice, so let's continue to be careful just in case.

"I'll pay you back!… Anyway, thank you."

Lee Sejin shouted again, and soon he took care of himself and quickly left the dorm.

I would see him again in less than 30 seconds.

'…You and I have to go to the practice room anyway.'

It was clear that he also couldn't sleep and his brain wasn't working. I shook my head and moved my feet.

* * *

Testar's Hi-five music video satisfied fans.

It was a sentence that might sound like nothing, but it actually meant a lot.

Because it meant <Idol Inc.>'s debut group had met the soaring expectations that were high enough to pierce the ceiling.

– Honestly, when I saw the teaser and heard that it was a double title, I was a little worried that the firepower would be dispersed… But it was a useless worry

– Ah, did you watch the music video~ This is how the capital of large corporations tastes!

– Ah, what should I do, my heart flutters so much The Magical Boy music video will come out too, right?

– It’s a crazy masterpiece. Quickly release the song, guys. Take my money

In addition, the tears of the people who couldn’t get tickets for the showcase overflowed.

– Idol Inc crazy bastards sold everything as a stock package, so they said there was no ticketing I heard the showcase was already sold out before the final episode!

– Does this make sense, Tnet! Among the people who bought it, there are fans of the eliminated participants and they resell the tickets at a high price

└I am glad it ended with ticket reselling. What if someone had a bad intention and booed at them at the showcase… Sigh…

While fans who couldn’t get tickets were worried and upset.

In fact, some of the fans of the eliminated participants didn’t resell their showcase tickets.

‘Let’s see how good you are.’

Whether there would actually be boos or commotion, it was certainly a risk factor that Tnet inadvertently overlooked.

And on June 18, when the music video for ‘Magical Boy’ was released.

The showcase started at 8 PM that evening.

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CHAPTER 72

I heard that the music video for ‘Magical Boy’ was released last midnight.

However, there was no time to catch up and monitor it. Cha Eugene’s half-dreaming nonsense was proving it.

“Hmm…? Is your hair done?”

“My hair was done a while ago, and we’re moving in the car now.”

“Oh…”

Cha Eugene went back to sleep with a vague exclamation.

Yes. Since last night, I’d been moving around, polishing, filming, interviewing…

We hadn’t been able to sleep properly for about a month., so it wouldn’t be strange if someone came out confused about who and where they were

“I-It’s the showcase now, right?”

“That’s right~”

I heard Seon Ahyeon take a deep breath after asking the manager with a tone of uncertainty. It seemed he was suddenly nervous because the event was right in front of him.

“Well, what we’ve been preparing this month… Let’s show them everything. No matter where you go, practice won’t betray you.”

“Of course~”

“Y-Yes!”

Some of the members who were awake responded to the encouragement said by Ryu Chungwoo whose voice was sinking.

And Kim Raebin, who was sitting next to me, murmured quietly.

“…In fact, the proportion of practice compared to the time period is great, but it is insufficient in terms of the absolute amount of practice…”

“…”

When I stared at him in silence, his words changed subtly.

“I think I’ll be able to perform the stage well with passion alone…”

“That’s right.”

It was a relief he was a sensible person even though he wasn’t sociable.

* * *

Most of the reporters who attended the showcase had high expectations.

It wasn’t about Testar’s skills, but about their popularity.

‘I’ll pick the number of views for the article.’

‘It would be damn nice if you fail.’

Reporters taking pictures and writing articles eagerly waited for the showcase to begin.

And in front of and behind the reporters, the shareholders who had purchased the stock package from <Idol Inc.> sat down.

Most of them had brought slogans and cheering tools. The shapes and colors were different because the official light stick had not yet been released, but the excitement of the fans was still visible.

In the atmosphere full of excitement, the opening began with lights on a dark stage.

– High five!

Wearing the same baseball uniform worn in the music video, Testar performed the stage with a more accurate group dance than in the music video.

– My feet are moving

Like zooming in~

To you

Ddan Ddan Daradara DAAN Yeah!

Jumping movements that move the body with excitement appeared frequently in the choreography to match the pleasant song.

Swish!

Every time they turned their bodies to the whistle or bounced their feet, the concentration on the stage increased significantly.

‘They’re good.’

‘The song is good, too!’

The witty ad-libs, such as playing rock-paper-scissors or greeting each other, were also cleverly cute.

‘They don’t look like rookies.’

‘People from the audition are good at this.’

The reporters turned the favorable impression into a fuss and worked hard to pick a title.

[‘Hi-five’ Testar begins to prove its popularity]

[Testar ‘Opening that ends with a homerun!’]

In the meantime, the Testar members who finished the opening briefly went in. And instead, the MC came out and dragged the time.

It was a face that everyone here knew.

“Hello~”

“Oh!”

While fans were both pleased and disgusted at the familiar MC of <Idol Inc.>, Testar frantically changed their clothes under the stage with the help of the staff.

“Argh, my head!”

“The baseball uniform really doesn’t come off…”

While Testar, who barely wore a school uniform jacket with splendid epaulets, ran out, the MC skillfully led the audience’s reaction.

“Hey~ long time no see, shareholder-nim!… Huh? You’re not happy to see me? Ah, let’s not do that between us~ We haven’t seen each other for three

months! Of course, only the shareholder-nim saw my face.”

A moment of laughter, playful boos, and cheers. The MC smiled and introduced the next stage.

“Then I hope you can meet your stock after a long time. Your stock has soared!”

And on the stage where the lights came on again.

Testar smiled and started dancing to the prelude.

It was <Just Me>.

“…!!”

It had been a while since the show ended, and the audience was enveloped in a strange nostalgia.

Moreover, it was a new feeling to see Testar singing <Just Me> with a smile, even dividing parts with each other.

It felt like watching the epilogue after a happy ending, so the audience enjoyed the stage with warm hearts.

– *What shines on the stage today?*

It’s me!

Yes, you’ll make Shining Star.

It’s me!

“Finally, you wake up and shine~”

Eventually, a chorus of chants ensued.

Testar, who was flustered, sang the song with a bigger smile.

It was a fun trendy song time, even several reporters who watched <Idol Inc.> were nodding their heads.

However, it didn’t warm everyone’s hearts.

Some were cold-hearted.

‘They’re pretty much done with their songs.’

‘They get excited just for sharing parts?’

They were fans of <Idol Inc.>’s eliminated participants who were attending the showcase with crooked minds.

Of course, most of the fans of the eliminated participants were just enjoying the stage.

Even if not the first participant they liked, Testar also had some members they liked to some extent.

However, there were always a few exceptions.

“It was the Challenger version! Thank you~”

The incident happened while the members were talking for a while after the next song was over.

“That version! I really wanted to do it!”

“Yes~ Congratulations, young Cha Eugene.”

“Hee.”

Cha Eugene was excited to try a different team version of the song <Final> than the one he did in the final, and the other members were looking at him more cutely than when there was no camera.

Reporters also didn't ask particularly malicious questions. However, a few sharp or trapping questions were asked.

"Everyone seems close, but who is the member you're least close with?"

"Hmm, the preparation for the album was done in a very short period of time. How was that possible?"

"VTIC made a comeback just a few days ago on the 12th. What do you think?"

The questions were all expected, so Ryu Chungwoo and Keun Sejin threw themselves out, gently blurring the topic.

"We're all getting to know each other~ But during <Idol Inc.>, everyone had developed a strange camaraderie… We're surprised that we became close faster than expected!"

"The preparation for the album was able to proceed quickly because the company had already prepared everything for it. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Director Kwak Shinkyun and the staff."

"When I meet VTIC sunbae-nim, I want to get a signed album! It was on my bucket list!"

At times like this, the surviving interview skills that the members learned to avoid evil editing were shining.

And the right question came up.

"You selected two songs. What is the charm of 'Magical Boy' that is different from the 'Hi-five' stage you showed earlier?"

“Ah.”

Ryu Chungwoo reflexively tried to grab the microphone, but after a brief decision, he handed the answer to the inventor of the idea, Park Moondae.

‘It’s not a weird question, so it should be okay for Moondae to answer it.’

He did it out of complete consideration, but Park Moondae was not a person who liked interviews very much.

‘Great.’

Still, he couldn’t turn the microphone back, so Park Moondae picked it up.

“The Magical Boy…”

It was then.

“…!”

“Ah!”

Something translucent strongly bounced off from below the stage and hit Park Moondae’s arm.

“Careful…!”

Ryu Chungwoo pulled Park Moondae with his quick reflexes, but since it flew so strongly, he couldn’t stop it properly.

“…”

Park Moondae looked down at his arm.

It was all wet.

‘They threw a water bottle.’

Water dripped from the splendid epaulets to the sleeves.

Seeing that his forehead was cold, it seemed that the side of his face was also slightly splattered.

His elbow throbbed a little.

‘They threw it hard.’

In an instant, the concert hall hardened with panic.

There were all sorts of chatter, worried murmurs, and small screams from the audience.

And the reporters became happy.

‘This is great.’

‘I don’t know who it is, but great job~’

Park Moondae quickly grasped the situation.

‘First of all, there are no strange ingredients.’

Considering that his forehead was intact, it was not hydrochloric acid or alcohol. In the worst-case scenario, the person who threw it had spit on it.

‘Then I’ll just let it go.’

The whole accident was over in three seconds.

It was possible thanks to his adolescence, where he always had to live by measuring the situation.

Park Moondae smiled.

“How quick-witted.”

“…!?”

“I guess they predicted my answer.”

And he took off his jacket. Inside the jacket, a school uniform shirt that fans already knew was revealed.

It was the white summer uniform from the Magical Boy music video.

“If you look directly at the stage, you can see the differentiated charm of this song, um. Enough that you’ll be able to confirm… That’s what I thought.”

“…Ah!”

The members quickly grasped the atmosphere, and they took off their jackets and threw them sideways.

“Then thanks to your urging, I’ll start right away. Magical Boy.”

Park Moondae brushed his hair which was still wet and took the microphone back.

Soon, the sound of a music box filled the concert hall.

♫♪♩♪-

♫♪♩♪-

♪♩-

In the dreamy purple stage setting, Park Moondae whose hair was still wet opened his mouth.

– I will meet you tomorrow

I’ve been thinking about it all-day

Have a dream blue as the day

And fans at the scene quickly forgot about the water bottle incident.

* * *

Testar’s showcase lasted less than an hour, never too long. However, articles and reviews came out after another even before it was over. Of course, the articles didn’t omit the mention of the accident.

[Testar, ‘Magical Boy’ with water-soaked dreams]

[The power of a prepared star. Crisis refined into a performance]

If you clicked on an article with these kinds of titles, you could see a picture of Park Moondae shaking off the remaining water from his hair in summer clothes.

Or it could also be a picture of him throwing a wet jacket. The water on the epaulet was splashed and reflected in the light, which actually enhanced the sense of beauty.

There were occasional photos of the water bottle, but most of them were captured from the videos they were taking, so the quality of the dynamic scenes where the object was inserted was not good.

Still, the response was clear.

– What kind of crazy idiot threw a water bottle at debuting idols?

– They threw it at his face If Cheongwoo hadn’t pulled him, he would have been hit in the face

– They’re obviously mentally ill

– They got caught, right? Please tell me they got caught and taken away

– I’m sad that I couldn’t go to the showcase and had to watch the stage late, but that bastard took my seat? Die, please

Fans were furious but deeply relieved by Park Moondae’s response.

– If he did something wrong, it could have ended in a mess, but I’m glad that Moondae handled it well. Really.

– He must have been flustered, but it was really amazing that he didn’t show it and passed it off naturally.

– Hey, I think Park Moondae just seriously didn’t notice? It seems that the interpretation of his Idol Inc’s character was correct~

└Did we ever mention his character here? Get the hell out

– I was moved to see the members take off their jackets as soon as they saw it. I think the kids get along well.

Still, WeTube’s cyber wrecker did not miss this good prey.

(TL notes: cyber wrecker = an influencer/YouTuber who makes fake news and stupid videos for money.)

Thanks to that, these kinds of titles briefly appeared in real-time popular videos of the day.

[What is the identity of the water bottle that flew to <Idol Inc.>’s first place?]

[Number 1 Idol got hit by water at the showcase!]

Ironically, thanks to the good response, all of these things brought out a buzz like viral marketing.

“Hyung, did you see this?”

And the news reached the ears of VTIC, who had just finished their first week of activities.

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CHAPTER 73

During the boring music show pre-recording waiting time, one of the VTIC members who was touching his smartphone as he liked told Cheongryeo.

What he showed was the 9th most popular video on WeTube in real-time.

[Number 1 Idol got hit by water at the showcase!]

[On the evening of the 18th, an idol group’s debut showcase was held at Red Square. The audition that heated up the internet a few months ago, <Idol Inc.>…]

Issue WeTuber was excitedly talking about the showcase water bottle incident while adding personal opinions.

“This is him, right? That Idol Inc…”

“…Ah.”

Cheongryeo looked at the screen and remembered the ridiculous personality test.

“Park Moondae.”

[He’s quick-witted.]

Just in time, the video showed a small, ambiguous-quality fancam (due to copyright issues). It was the scene where Park Moondae gently took care of the situation.

“Isn’t he really smart?”

“That’s right.”

“But it’s such a shame. We had the same schedule…”

Other members who were sneakily watching from the side also joined in and clicked their tongues.

“It’s been a couple of days since Tnet acted recklessly.”

“Their index is good, but it’s a pity that they won’t get first place.”

The slightly sympathetic tone presupposed the conviction that they would win in the second week as well.

In fact, it was inevitable.

[#1 Night Sign / VTIC]

It was the daily ranking of the nation’s largest music site.

Since the music charts were reorganized so that they couldn’t be seen in real time, it was impossible to break through the existing music charts and immediately win first place unless it was dire.

‘It takes a week at the earliest.’

The same was true for Testar’s music, which would be released at midnight.

Then, if Testar’s album sales in the 1st week beat VTIC’s 2nd week with a triple score or higher, they could expect to win first place on the music show, but unfortunately, their initial period overlapped with VTIC for about a day.

Unless Testar in either case set a record that was crazy enough to exceed expectations, their loss was meant to be.

Of course, even if they were from the audition, saying that a rookie boy idol won first place on the music charts was absurd.

“Ah~ If we have time to worry about hubaes, let’s just do our best!”

“Right!”

VTIC quickly returned to their respective interests.

And Cheongryeo rested his chin and thought.

‘…I might lose.’

* * *

The debut showcase ended safely in an enthusiastic atmosphere.

But there was no special after-party.

“We just debuted, we can’t appear like a hoppang on TV. We were fed a lot~”

(TL notes: Hoppang = a steamed bun, usually filled with red bean paste.)

“Hoppang is delicious!”

“Your face has to look good, you can’t be so chubby that makes people want to eat you.”

“Aha!”

Cha Eugene was convinced at once. After appreciating Keun Sejin’s amazing communication skills for a while, I became the subject of conversation again.

“Still, Moondae’s achievement is the real after-party.”

“T-That’s right”

“It was great.”

“…Yes, thank you.”

“Haha, this guy is embarrassed!”

“…”

I… Since the end of the showcase, I had been hearing the words like ‘Park Moondae’s quick wit is the best in the world’.

Rather than being embarrassed, I just felt uncomfortable.

In particular, it seemed that Keun Sejin was doing that on purpose to embarrass me even more.

“You all worked hard, wait… Let’s take a rest.”

“Yay~”

“Finally.”

Anyway, instead of an after-party, I received a short break. At Ryu Chungwoo’s words, the members scattered to the dorm, showing a wide spectrum of reactions from relief to joy.

For your information, I slept. Lee Sejin, who shared the same room, also slept, improving sleep quality.

‘I miss the characteristic of not having to sleep.’

But reality show cameras were still running. Thanks to that, we had to gather in the living room again after spending a short personal time.

“Looks like everyone had a good rest.”

“Hehe.”

Cha Eugene, who obviously forgot the snack, laughed.

And we all looked at Ryu Chungwoo’s smartphone.

“It’s amazing that it’s already released.”

“I-I’m nervous…”

Because the debut album would be released at midnight.

Why don’t you don’t watch it on your own instead of watching it as one group together… Well, maybe it was because this image would come out nice.

“Oh! It’s coming!”

Soon, the smartphone clock unit changed.

[00 : 00]

“D-Did the song come out?”

“Are you looking at it now?”

Kim Raebin firmly organized it.

“It takes more than an hour to see it on the 24Hits chart.”

“An hour…”

Lee Sejin disappeared into the kitchen, spitting out a sigh. It seemed he was trying to bring some water.

‘…There’s a high probability that it won’t show up after an hour.’

Because we had to compete with an hour-long performance among other songs that were counted over 24 hours.

Even VTIC ranked 87th on the 24-hour chart after an hour.

Perhaps Kim Raebin tried to continuously explain this fact, but he closed his mouth after making eye contact with me.

“…?”

Isn’t it okay to explain it this time?

Keun Sejin said with a smile, as if trying to offset the tense atmosphere.

“Then we… How about watching the ‘Magical Boy’ music video first?”

“Ah.”

Right. We hadn’t seen that yet.

I had just returned to the dorm and had a break, so I didn’t really have the time to think about it

‘The reality show staff asked to film a reaction for this as well.’

“That’s a good idea.”

“Look in the big one!”

Cha Eugene quickly picked up the remote control and changed the TV screen to WeTube.

There was no need to search, the music video was on the top spot in real-time.

[Testar(TeSTAR) ‘Magical Boy’ Official MV]

“Yees!”

“W-Wow.”

The members stared at the screen as if they didn’t realize it and finally came to their senses.

“Oh. The thumbnail is Moondae.”

“I-It came out well.”

The thumbnail was of Park Moondae looking back in front of the classroom window.

Behind the white curtains, the sky colored with scarlet and purple was shining with backlight.

‘Is this first-place privilege?’

I looked at the thumbnails in disbelief, then pressed the play button using the remote control that Cha Eugene was holding.

“Oh.”

The music video for ‘Magical Boy’ started playing with Cha Eugene’s embarrassed voice in the background.

The video started with the thumbnail screen.

[…]

In the meantime, Park Moondae was looking out the window at the setting sun in an empty classroom.

The moment he looked back and made eye contact with the camera.

The song started.

– I will meet you tomorrow

I’ve been thinking about it all-day

Have a dream blue as the day

The screen changed.

The old and broken campus was clearly visible under the midday sun and suddenly, glistening soap bubbles that were dyed purple poured down.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

And in the ordinary places of the school, the images of the members doing extraordinary actions passed by each part.

– Even if the world is cold

Dreams are sweet

Even if reality collapses,

Dreams are clear

In a destroyed classroom, Cha Eugene was sitting at a desk unscathed alone.

He lined up animal-shaped dolls at the corner and turned their gears. Because of the shadows and lighting, the dolls looked like small creatures.

– I don’t want to be locked

I want to fall asleep.

I’m drawing a dream

But reality is breathing

All the time…

Seon Ahyeon, who was sitting on a bed in the infirmary, tore off a pillowcase. Instead of cotton, shiny dandelion fluffy things popped out of it and sparkled around the bed.

-All that time.

Maybe it’s what I needed

The magic to the future

So I

Ryu Chungwoo shot flowers in the garden with a toy gun. Instead of bullet balls or water, a stream of light burst out and blue petals soared

And a zoom that unfolded on the rooftop with a purple sunset.

-Cast a spell

Make a wish come

true true true

– Dive into the future quietly

– Cast a spell

Make a dream come

true true true

– Sleep with a dream, blue

The interlude that came out after the chorus had more split in beats, followed by a splendid dance break.

The midday rooftop was cross-edited, and the mysteriousness of the purple background scene deepened.

“We had a hard time because we did a new makeup.”

“That’s right! Everyone, if you look closely… There is a difference between the photo taken during the day and the photo taken at sunset both in the outfit and makeup!”

Keun Sejin explained to the camera.

It was true.

In the daytime background, we were almost bare-faced, and in the sunset background, we had something like glitter and flushes under our eyes.

As for the costume, they added more accessories when filming the sunset background.

‘If we had to film it in one day, it would’ve been like hell.’

Fortunately, the cut came out well, paying off the hard work.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

And the second verse.

Kim Raebin came out of the back after strange finger movements that seemed hypnotizing.

And he did a melody rap in a slow, complex, and very strange rhythm.

Crossing the broken cabinet in the hallway was Kim Raebin who was sitting on a stack of piles and throwing awls.

“Oh!”

“Your voice is good.”

“…Thank you.”

Kim Raebin replied a little awkwardly, unable to hide his pride.

“But how did you pick something scary like an awl, Raebin-ssi?”

“…Because it’s so cute…?”

“…?”

Keun Sejin’s mouth fell shut at the answer beyond his imagination. I answered pleasantly instead.

“Let’s say so.”

“Right. It’s so cute, Raebin.”

I was relieved to see that the color of the music video was okay so I reacted more comfortably.

On the screen that followed, Lee Sejin appeared last.

Lee Sejin was standing inside the school building, looking at the main entrance. The school ground was visible through the glass door.

And in the bridge before the last chorus.

The tone of the music box, which was a riff melody, was lowered, and a vocal melody followed on top of it.

– *What I can’t hide even if I hide it*

Maybe it’s magic

out of breath and trembling

A dream.

Lee Sejin broke the glass door.

At that moment, along with the sound of a film rolling, the cuts came back together.

A strange whisper passed by, like a tape being turned backwards, and then a cut was inserted without music

.

Park Moondae walked into the school ground from outside the school.

[…]

Soon, Park Moondae, who stopped in front of the entrance, stretched out both hands and grabbed the handle. And.

Click.

Set the lock.

…*Click.*

As the film turned around, the final chorus burst out along with the choreography.

– Cast a spell

Make a wish come

true true true

– Sleep quietly into the future

– Cast a spell

Make a dream come

true true true

– Fall into the dream, blue

Before I knew it, the area around the rooftop where the choreography took place had turned into a more unrealistic space.

The railings surrounding the rooftop were broken, forming transparent crystals. And like a prism, it distorted the light.

Like the light that disturbed the background, the choreography had become more complicated and the curve had become stronger.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

At the end of the choreography. The members naturally changed the formation to a circle. The song ended as soon as they laid their heads together on the rooftop.

Thud.

Purple soap bubbles popped out.

[…]

And a black screen appeared.

In the midst of the slowly arranged inst of ‘Magical Boy’, the classic ending credits went up like a short film.

Only then did the members start talking again.

“Wow!!”

“It turned out so well?”

“Thank you, director.”

“I-I think it came out great…”

It had become a strange situation where no one accepted each other’s words because they spoke simultaneously.

But no one cared and they talked excitedly.

“Really, um, it’s fun because it came out meaningfully.”

“I think fans will have fun discovering the various details.”

“Yeah, we like it, so I hope the fans will like it, too~”

The atmosphere couldn’t be any warmer than this.

‘We made a good start, so they’re excited.’

Thanks to this, when checking the music charts, the tension wasn’t so high that it felt uncomfortable.

And the result.

“Wow! It went in~”

We were ranked 85th and 88th.

‘…One song is slightly higher than VTIC.’

The popularity of the audition that had been booming nationwide was bigger than I had expected.

‘It’s crazy.’

However, perhaps because there were more people who were more accustomed to words like ‘real-time number 1 entry’, the members were just happy.

Even if I knew it in my head, all I could see right now was the top 80.

So a more intense reaction erupted next.

“A-All our songs…”

“Gasp.”

On other music sites where real-time charts were still alive, Testar’s title songs showed off their spirits by taking first and second place side by side.

[No. 1 Hi-five / Testar] New!

[No. 2 Magical Boy / Testar] New!

[No. 3 Night Sign / VTIC] ▼2

[…]

All four songs released from this album were even included in the top seven.

Of course, after a while, it would be pushed back by VTIC in an instant. It was crazy, though.

The members, who finally realized it, continued to look at the smartphone screen in shock.

“L-Let’s take a screenshot.”

“That’s a good idea.”

It was a good signal that erupted from the beginning of our activity when we had not even appeared on music shows yet.

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CHAPTER 74

Testar’s propaganda on the music chart caused a huge stir.

[Testar 24 Hits entry ranking (1 hour)]

: Hi-five in 85th place and Magical Boy in 88th place, renewed male idol’s highest entry ranking after chart reorganization

One song ranks higher than VTIC

– I’m out of my mind

– Wow, Idol Inc is scary

– I think we need to put Testar in the top 3 male idols? Let’s get rid of T-holic

└This bastard is not a Testar fan. Please report this troll

└Report is done~

– I knew it would be like this. Even from the teaser alone, the firepower is crazy

-They said the reservation period was short and they sold 250,000 copies in one day They were on a different scale as soon as they debuted

– Wow I am getting hooked? I’ll stick with them for now

└ What a great loyalty

The level of recognition had already risen to the highest level in Korea.

The comments which were added one by one by the people who had watched <Idol Inc.> at least once couldn’t even be considered a fuss.

In addition, when the competition structure was created, the reaction of VTIC fans turned cold.

– Debut album entry renews the rankings The disruption to the ecosystem of broadcasting companies is really serious.

– You have to look at the number, they’re obviously robbing empty houses

└Unfortunately, the music only comes out now If it came out a month ago, it would have been worth aiming for the top 70

└What a great delusion Ah, Testar daddies are really shameless~

– Enjoy it now~ Idol Inc’s next album will fall It will end with a career-high debut album~

└Have Vtic fans lost it?

└How ugly

– It seems everyone had a controversy at least once during the audition program, it’s amazing that so many people listen to this…

Thanks to malicious netizens who were excited to put firewood and drive a wedge between them, the atmosphere among fandoms was freezing like thin ice.

But apart from that, people who were only moderately interested in idols really enjoyed it.

– Wow, then I’ll see Vtic and Testar together in the music show this week

– It’s going to be super fun

– If this continues, isn’t Testar going to win first place next week?

└I don’t know. VTIC’s initial period lasted until today, but 180,000 copies were sold today

└Hiik, that number is crazy too

└I think the key is how much the songs will explode after Testar’s performance?

└Oho, Testar needs to set up a lot of entertainment schedules

The next day, Testar put ‘Hi-five’ at 17th and ‘Magical Boy’ at 19th on the daily chart.

It was ridiculously fast, but of course not as fast as VTIC.

– Is Testar crazy?

– Since VTIC is heaven, it’s out of the question Honestly, I can’t believe that rookie boy idol is doing that on the music charts

– It’s amazing that they don’t lose the ranking and maintained it

Everyone was moderately surprised and moderately expected it.

And so Thursday came.

It was Testar’s first pre-recording of the music show.

* * *

“Too sleepy.”

“Yeah.”

I never thought that the day would come when I could truly sympathize with Cha Eugene’s words.

‘I knew would do it early in the morning. But I didn’t think about the preparation time.’

Let’s say the pre-recording of the music show starts at 4:30 a.m. Then you have to stand by at the broadcasting station at 4 o’clock at the latest. Then you have to go to the salon a few hours before that…

In short, it was night labor.

‘We keep moving indoors, but what about the people who come to watch?’

It was said that they applied and were selected by lottery, but honestly, if you were going to call people at this time, you should give them an hourly wage.

It was fortunate that the weather was not cold. No one would catch a cold while waiting.

“I’m going to sleep…”

Cha Eugene stretched out on the sofa as soon as he entered the waiting room.

“S-Should I wake him up? I-If he looks like he just woke up from his sleep, it won’t reflect well…”

“He’s been living like that, but he’s doing well. Don’t worry about him.”

“I-I see.”

At Kim Raebin’s firm words, Seon Ahyeon put his hands back together. His face was pale.

He seemed nervous rather than lacking sleep.

“…Wait a minute.”

“Hn?”

I rummaged through the small bag I was carrying and threw a bunch of candy to Seon Ahyeon.

It was glucose candy.

“Eat some. It’s good for when you’re tired.”

“U-Uh…”

“Heol, Moondae, me too!”

Keun Sejin, who was looking at his smartphone, quickly tried to take candy from Seon Ahyeon but was unexpectedly stopped by Seon Ahyeon.

“I-I-I will eat it well!”

“No, Ahyeon…!”

“…”

I took out more candy from my bag and threw it without saying a word. Keun Sejin accepted it with joy.

“Oh, thank you!”

‘…Whatever, I’ll buy three or four times as much, so I can eat as much as I want.’

The financial situation was still not good but this was not a desirable phenomenon.

Then, the manager and Ryu Chungwoo came in with the camera outside the door.

‘Is it for the reality show again?’

Since this music show was on Tnet, it seemed it was easy for them to get in and out.

The manager smiled broadly and waved. Ryu Chungwoo said with a smile.

“Guys, the fans sent us lunch boxes!”

“Gasp!”

“…Lunchbox!”

Cha Eugene, who had been sleeping, got up. It was amazing.

The lunch boxes that came into the waiting room were dazzling.

‘I never thought I’d see a 5-layered lunch box in real life.’

I was a bit taken aback as I took apart the lunchbox each filled with dishes.

Lunchboxes were not supposed to be better than ordinary meals… This was more than just a meal.

A sticker was attached to the top of the lunch box.

[Testar’s debut song]

[It’s magic ♡]

At the bottom, only ‘All Testar fans’ were written.

“…”

It seemed several individual fan communities prepared it together. Since it was the group’s first debut stage, they must have sent it together rather than sharing names.

It was a delicate consideration for the members.

“Let’s take a picture.”

“I think it would be better to take one shot like this, open it, and take another shot.”

“That’s a great idea. Moondae is good at quickly taking pictures, he should take it.”

“Okay.”

“Oh?”

I took a few shots with my phone, adjusting the angle and focus without complaining. Then I adjusted the brightness and saturation to correct the color right away.

“You took good pictures.”

“Y-You’re good with your hands…!”

“Thank you. I want to upload this, is it okay?”

“Huh?”

Actually, I asked the members, but the question was directed to the manager.

It was because we had never personally posted anything in particular ever since Lee Sejin posted. It was because there was a problem with spoilers and an issue with the atmosphere.

I thought it would be okay to upload it, and fortunately, the manager also sent an okay gesture.

The members also checked the gesture and proceeded with it.

“Of course, it’s okay~”

“Moondae’s idea is great.”

“Are we going to eat now?”

Cha Eugene’s earnest question was silently ignored.

Instead, Kim Raebin nodded seriously.

“Starting with this, I hope we can post more often.”

“…Right.”

But you… Check and post it if you can.

“Let’s put in I love you.”

“Then, if we made a mistake, wouldn’t it look like we love them for giving us lunchboxes?”

“Ugh.”

The members eagerly started writing phrases as I edited the photos.

“There’s a 180-character limit. Let’s choose carefully.”

“Yes!”

So the finished phrase was this.

[This is Testar(TeSTAR)’s account!]

: We’re waiting for our first music show recording! Thank you so much for the lunchboxes! We’ll eat and work hard and do our best on stage.

As much as we’ve worked hard on it, there are so many things we want to show you! For everyone who has been waiting for us, thank you so much and I love you Let’s see each other for a long time♡ (photo) (photo) (photo)

“Great! It’s uploaded!”

While the members were feeling proud, Ryu Chungwoo who was looking at it with a faint smile suddenly looked puzzled.

“…?”

“Wait, what time is it now?”

…It was three-fifty.

It was early in the morning.

Seon Ahyeon turned pale.

“R-Right now, us, n-notification in the early morning.”

“Delete… Will they get a notification if we delete it?”

“Of course, they will…”

“…”

The atmosphere became solemn.

Of course, there were many idols who posted at dawn, but in this case, the problem was that the news of the group, which was uploaded for the first time in a month, was sent like a morning chat.

Cha Eugene, who was making a sad face while looking at the lunch box, asked.

“What about it?”

“It’s a nuisance if you get a notification at dawn.”

“Aha.”

Cha Eugene said brightly.

“Let’s apologize!”

“…!”

After a while, another new notification popped up on Testar’s account.

[This is Testar(TeSTAR)’s account!]

: Sorry for posting suddenly in the morning It happened because we lost our sense of time… Next time, we’ll be sure to set it during the day! (Photo)

The attached additional photo was of Testar in the waiting room with their heads down together.

I felt something was out of place.

“…Wait a minute.”

“What is it?”

“I think we spoiled our outfits.”

“…!!”

…Fortunately, I was able to ask the production crew for their understanding.

However, just before the pre-recording, the faces of the members who experienced an unexpected trial turned pale.

“…From now on, let’s think for at least about 30 minutes before posting on SNS.”

“Yes…”

After the great feast was over, the recording time was right around the corner.

“Let’s eat the lunch box quickly now!”

“There’s no time, let’s eat after we’re done.”

“Uh…”

Cha Eugene was heartbroken.

We drank the vitamin drink included in the lunch box and headed straight to the stage.

“Woow!”

About 200 people who had been waiting in line since last night cheered.

By the way, we were not even on stage yet. We were just going back and forth next to the stage.

Keun Sejin said seriously.

“Let’s not ask questions like ‘Have you eaten?’. It seems we’re the only ones eating packed lunches and taking medicine this early in the morning.”

The members, fully realizing that it was dawn due to the previous incident, nodded eagerly.

Except for Cha Eugene.

“But I couldn’t eat…”

“Let’s eat as soon as we’re done.”

“…Yeah.”

Ryu Chungwoo lightly subdued the situation.

“Let’s go up!”

“Yes.”

The members went up to the stage at the instruction of the staff.

The set was great. It seemed the key points of the MV’s broken school set had been moved here, and even the purple LED and the bubble effect were perfect.

‘They’ve spent some money.’

But there was no time to look around the set closely. Because hundreds of people were watching in front of me.

“This is our first recording stage. Everyone, I look forward to your kind cooperation.”

“Please take good care of us~”

As the members gave a greeting following Ryu Chungwoo’s lead, screams and greetings mixed with cheers were heard from below.

“If there’s anything you want from Testar…”

“Please post more often!”

“Ah, that.”

They must have checked the posts on SNS earlier; laughter erupted from under the stage. Thanks to this, Ryu Chungwoo stopped laughing.

“We’ll post often. Not in the early morning.”

“Increase it from today right away!”

“How often do you want us to upload…”

“Every day!”

The fans shouted at the top of their lungs. They weren’t losing out to Raebin. It was amazing.

It was the first time I had a conversation so close to the stage, so I couldn’t honestly say that the communication seemed natural.

But it was refreshing in its own way. Since our rookie days were short, fans would enjoy this atmosphere too.

“Ah, let’s begin.”

The members, who had a short conversation with a few words, soon took their positions on the stage at the staff’s signal.

I came forward because I started from the middle for the first part.

“Moondae!”

After thinking about it for a moment, I made a small heart. That… Not the so-called K-heart. It was just a finger heart.

“Aagh!!”

I felt like my hands and feet were about to explode, but it was okay because people looked happy…

My legs would hurt in the morning, but shouldn’t I have fun like this?

When the reaction subsided, the prelude came out.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

And from under the stage, I heard powerful voices.

‘…It’s a fanchant.’

I never thought I would hear that.

– I will meet you tomorrow

I’ve been thinking about it all-day

“All day!”

I unconsciously laughed as I entered the first verse.

It was kind of fun.

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CHAPTER 75

MusicBomb kicked off Thursday at 7 pm.

The Internet was unusually crowded with people waiting for the main show.

– The line-up is impressive, I like it

– Testar will come out first, so call me when they come out

This was because two large boy idol groups appeared on the music show together, and one of them just debuted, too.

Thanks to this, Testar’s fans were more active.

– Did you see the kids posted at dawn? So cute

└Posting a photo of apologizing because they were too flustered, what a nerd… But next time, make sure to include a selfie. That would make up the apology

– It’s okay to post 50 million posts in the morning, so I hope they post a lot

– Good job with the lunchbox support. The kids must have had a hard time at dawn, I hope they had eaten well

– I was so jealous when I read the pre-recording review that I almost tore my stomach… They filmed it three times, and they talked a lot in between

– They said Moondae did aegyo heart…

└Crazy

└Why did I fail to get into the pre-recording

└Who else took a fancam? Please upload it like this…

As the pre-recording review was already released, all kinds of information, including costumes, makeup, fan services, and talk, became familiar to fans.

So fans waited for the show with more excitement.

– High five isn’t pre-recording, it’s live, right?

└ I’m already looking forward to what kind of baseball uniform it will be…

– Ah, when will it come out? Is there any spoiler about the order?

Unfortunately, Testar’s stage didn’t come out for a long time. Because it was Tnet’s music show, they were being treated well.

– The order is… going like this…?

– It’s good but I’m sad

– Where are you guys

What was comforting to fans was that the group introduction interviews appeared in the mid to late stages.

[We have gathered Testar, rookies who have appeared like comets!]

[Take your STAR! Hello, we’re Testar!]

Testar who appeared on the screen smiled and waved her hands. Wearing baseball uniforms, they carried props that fit their image, from guards to gloves.

-Crazy, baseball uniform

– Moondae looks good with black hair, too. He’s become a black puppy

– The person who did Cha Eugene’s pink hair!! Thank you!! Ah, I love it!

– Damn

– The team chant is good

[Testar, how do you feel about today’s performance?]

[I’m really nervous, but I hope we can show you everything as much as we had prepared!]

The interview was nothing special, it ended with an ordinary script and a chorus. However, fans enjoyed watching the members.

And when the stage was finally broadcasted.

– Heol

Reactions poured in an instant.

– They’re damn good?

– Shouldn’t the blind infatuation come off after the audition? Why are you so good?

– It’s a concept that’s perfect for being solemn, but they really pull it off… Maybe it’s because they’re the ones who chose it

– I’m not kidding. I think I really became a fan. Hurry up and tell me the name of the person who looks like a brown-haired flower deer

└Seon Ahyeon

└Good catch sir, our baby is an angel

– I’m the manager of Testar baseball team from now on. I won’t get refuted

‘Hi-five’ live performance was really fun

Testar, who quickly found the cameras and made mischievous expressions or refreshing smiles that matched the concept, certainly looked like they owned the song.

Because they divided their parts, the live performance was not shaken. They seemed happy to take off the stage with the perfect choreography without showing signs of nervousness.

– Ah, it’s fun

– Kya, as expected, idols have to perform well on stage

People talked as if the stage was already over just by watching ‘Hi-five’, but as soon as the stage of ‘Magical Boy’ came out, the comment window and SNS were again plastered with new posts.

– Wow, I am speechless

– Moondae has good eyes, I know why he pushed this song

└Yeah, as expected, the fortune-teller Tibetan fox who was picking the concepts at Idol Inc didn’t go anywhere

└

– There aren’t many boy idols that can make this dreamy concept isn’t cringe, so I think we should add Testar to the history book

The Testar members on the screen stirred the stage to the sensual deep house song, with a dreamy music box melody setting the mood.

Taking advantage of the fact that the stage was pre-recorded, they added some graphic effects; the sparkling and glitching were not excessive, making good use of the mysterious keywords of ‘surreal’ and ‘magic’.

And since they didn’t let go of the ‘school setting’, the refreshing and uneasy feeling of adolescence was also alive without being too excessive.

This was because some dramatic movements were added to the decisive choreography.

And the members who were at the center of the choreography performed it so well that it was jaw-dropping.

People admired it and expressed their tastes.

– To be honest, the baseball song from earlier is better for popularity, but in the end, it seems that this is the one that wins

┗? Isn’t it the other way around? This song is more trendy and the baseball is for performance

┗Let’s just say both are good

– Hey, it’s really humankind’s victory, How can you sing both songs and perform both stages so well?

– To be honest, Magical Boy wins by a landslide. From the narrative to the choreography and melody. High Five is a bit B-class compared to this one.

┗Yes, but High Five is higher on the music charts~

┗It will flip over soon.

┗Aah, guys, don’t fight… Testar does both…

┗That’s right, please enjoy it

Fans enjoyed the afterglow of the stage with excitement.

– There’s a rookie who tore up their debut stage?

Yes, it was their Testar.

– I wonder if a shabby person like me can like such a precious idol

– Shareholders-nim, thank you for your good eyes… I am grateful…

– I can feel the hearts of our kids who divided their parts well so that no one was upset

An old ballad group’s performance was broadcasted next, but Testar’s fans were in a rush, soaked in the lingering aftertaste of watching the first official debut stage.

However, the atmosphere changed slightly when VTIC came out.

– Show them what class is

– Wow, they’re so good that I am scared

– Shouldn’t we register them for something like a cultural asset?

– Where are all the guys who tried to drop adlibs after Tholic?

The noir-inspired swing house song was terrifyingly sophisticated and intense.

But originally, people were more interested in fresh images and dark horses. Therefore, the mention of the Testar did not fade.

– Ah, the future of K-pop is bright~

– We can watch both stages together throughout this week

Since VTIC’s stage was the ending, the 1st place announcement was held right after.

[This week’s 1st place is… It’s VTIC’s Night Sign! Congratulations~]

[Wow~]

VTIC skipped MusicBomb to come out of the music show last week. Thanks to that, they were able to win the first-place trophy along with the comeback stage.

-

– It was so obvious that I almost forgot to celebrate

– Congratulations!

[Thank you very much. First of all, everyone who has worked hard together for this album…]

Neither VTIC nor netizens were surprised.

There was no big impression, but the happy and joyful acceptance speech continued.

And not long after, the MC threw a closing comment.

[The joy of music that makes you burst into laughter!]

[Music~bomb! See you next week!]

– It was fun~

– It was worth watching music bomb today after a long time

In the full wave atmosphere, VTIC members came forward for the first-place encore.

At that time, an unexpected cut was broadcasted.

Cheongryeo came forward and looked back at Testar who just entered, smiling and waving at them.

-Eh, did you see that?

-?? It’s Cheongryeo, right?

– No, what’s up with Cheongryeo, he said he had no friends in other groups

– I think they’ve become close

– Cute

– As expected, hubaes are cute

People talked happily, not expecting that the person who received the greeting was agitated.

* * *

‘…What’s with the sudden greeting?’

VTIC had arrived in a hurry due to a scheduling problem and immediately entered the live broadcast, so there was no time to say hello.

In other words, it meant that this was the first time I saw Cheongryeo after <Idol Inc.>

But even though we didn’t even make eye contact, he openly waved his hands?

‘He doesn’t seem to be that kind of person.’

I felt a little uncomfortable, but I soon left it alone. I was so busy that I didn’t care if someone greeted me or not.

‘I guess he’s excited because he won first place.’

“I think he said hello to you, Moondae? I guess it’s because he met you during the Casting Call.”

“Hmm, maybe.”

I agreed with Ryu Chungwoo’s words and moved on.

I heard Cha Eugene’s hopeful voice.

“Can we go home now?”

“Hey, you should say bye before you go~”

Keun Sejin muttered in response to the manager’s answer.

“Oh, I guess they’re still doing that here.”

“What?”

“Standing in line to greet the PD.”

“Hmm.”

I’d also heard of that story. I heard that greeting was the reason idols got home late on music shows after taking a group shot during the 1st place announcement.

‘I heard that a few other music shows do this as well.’

Thanks to this, I had to go home so late, so I wasn’t too happy about it. I had a hard time staying awake since early in the morning.

‘…Still, it’s for social life, what else can I do.’

It was better not to stand out for no reason.

We followed the manager without a word.

“T-This is a little awkward…!”

When we arrived in the hallway and lined up, Seon Ahyeon whispered with a flustered face.

The cast was more crowded than I thought and their attention was focused on us. It felt like someone was going to talk to me at any moment.

In actuality, it was the first time we met in a group like this even though we had greeted them before to distribute the albums.

‘The sociable guys will take care of it.’

I ignored their gazes and chatted with Seon Ahyeon.

“How was the stage?”

“Huh? O-Of course… I-It was great!”

“In what way?”

“Um… T-There are people who support me, t-the song is good, t-the members I work with are close…”

“…”

‘Honestly, aren’t we all close?’

However, there was no need to jinx it by pointing it out. I just shut up and nodded. Seon Ahyeon’s face brightened.

Then, I saw people moving out on the other side of the hallway like water in low tide.

At this timing, there was only one.

‘It must be VTIC.’

The ballad group that performed after us was already absent before the first place was announced because of their schedules. It was interesting that they could get a privilege from such a place even though their annual leave was full.

With the same principle, VTIC was able to greet the PD quickly thanks to their years of experience and popularity.

‘…Is there any special privilege for T1 affiliates?’

As I thought about deep-rooted evil and muttered to myself, VTIC passed by.

Let’s just say hello.

But someone stopped walking and started talking to me.

“Ah, Moondae-ssi, nice to meet you again. Congratulations on winning first place.”

“…!”

It was Cheongryeo.

“Ah, this is him…?”

“That’s right.”

“Wow, nice to meet you. Good luck with your activity, fighting!”

Other VTIC members also pretended not to know and added one word at a time. Cheongryeo was smiling.

‘…This bastard seems to be doing this on purpose?’

I couldn’t throw away my doubts and just said hello.

“Yes, thank you. It’s good to see you, sunbae-nim.”

“It’s good to see you, too. Um… Shall we exchange numbers? It’s rare for our activities to overlap like this.”

“…I’m grateful.”

Let’s exchange numbers for now. It might be useful. I calmly took out my smartphone.

However, I doubted his intention of saying this in the hallway where other cast members were laughing.

‘I just need to quietly get his number through the manager.’

He didn’t have to bother to say hello when the camera was on, I was certain that he was up to something. I didn’t know what it was.

‘…Is it just to show off your connections?’

Anyway, it was true that Park Moondae won first place in the audition program. Cheongryeo was probably just seeking attention.

‘How can I properly understand the personality of a guy who I only met once?’

“I’ll contact you.”

“Thank you. Have a safe trip home.”

VTIC quickly disappeared from the hallway. I put my phone back, holding back my sigh.

Next to me, Keun Sejin clapped and grinned.

“Wow, Moondae, you give your number to a boy idol before to a girl idol… Cough.”

Eat more glucose candy.

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CHAPTER 76

Keun Sejin grumbled for quite some time.

“No, you’re not playing along. It’s not like I asked for a girl’s number.”

“…”

If you did, something else would have gone away, not glucose candy.

Anyway, after eating all the candy, Keun Sejin felt better and he joked again after getting into the car.

“Ah, I get it. Is there a girl idol you want to see, Moondae?”

There isn’t any, you bastard.

‘I saw them a lot at events, what are you talking about.’

I smirked and replied.

“What about you?”

“Ah, I’m married to the fans~ Girl idol? What is that?”

Ryu Chungwoo laughed at Keun Sejin’s natural words.

Kim Raebin responded seriously.

“That’s right. We should try to stay wary of other groups, regardless of gender.”

“Hn?”

“Because girl idols are also competitors…!”

“…?”

Everyone couldn’t answer for a moment because Kim Raebin suddenly shouted fiercely.

I didn’t know what kind of signal he took it for, but Kim Raebin continued to explain more seriously.

“Think carefully. Idols are a long-term competition. But there are only a few people who like idols. Then, idol groups last for a long time regardless of gender, and the more you try different concepts, the more our target audience overlaps…!”

Seon Ahyeon was taken aback.

“I-I see…!”

“That’s right. So we must always be on our guard against idol groups whose demands might overlap!”

“…”

“…Um.”

There was a moment of silence.

‘Just… Let’s just agree.’

I struggled to open my mouth.

“Um, that’s right.”

“…!! Right!”

Kim Raebin’s eyes sparkled as if he was enjoying the moment of victory. Ryu Chungwoo gently took over the situation.

“Raebin is smart.”

“Thank you!”

Behind Kim Raebin’s spirited voice, I heard Cha Eugene muttering softly.

“Are you an idiot?”

The relationship between those two similar people consisted of ignoring each other. I got it now.

* * *

Filming for music shows continued every day until Sunday after that.

After doing the pre-recording in the middle of the night every other day, my head started to feel dizzy.

At least, the pre-recording on Fridays was held from 9:00, so I could take a breather, but since I went to work at 7:00, there was no big difference.

I became like this with even the characteristics of ‘Baccus 500′, so I didn’t have to see the other guys’ situation to know how they were doing.

‘Lee Sejin almost collapsed yesterday.’

Fortunately, he fell down in the car and finished without getting hurt. Perhaps the agency was also surprised, the diet that didn’t contain any grease had loosened up since then.

In the midst of this, we had to shoot reality show content in the evening so it was natural that our physical strength would run out.

‘…I can’t believe I have to do this every week.’

The only thing I liked was the moment when I performed on stage while listening to the cheers. The fact that both fans and idols had to put up with the time of endurance for that moment was a great structure.

It was even more so considering the fact that there were many children crying because they didn’t get this opportunity.

‘They’re squeezing people out.’

I sighed.

“In the third week of June, the number one popular music is… Congratulations, VTIC’s Night Sign!”

Anyway, the last music show on the weekend was finally over. I mechanically applauded the first-place winner.

‘I slept a little because they didn’t let us do a pre-recording here.’

From what I heard, it seemed they were a bit territorial because we were from a cable audition.

For that reason, our order of appearance was in the early and middle stages.

Of course, there were pros and cons. Since there was no pre-recording, there was a limit to the composition of the stage.

Because we had to finish the stage with just one live broadcast.

‘In the first week of activities… Pre-recording would be useful.’

It was ridiculous when I thought about it, but if there was no work-life balance anyway, I thought it was better to have a good result.

“Shall we take some pictures?”

“I’d love to!”

“Moondae, how about a selfie?!”

As soon as I returned to the waiting room, I received a photo request first.

‘It’s for SNS upload.’

I had to take a picture of this. Needless to say, I just received the smartphone and turned on the front camera.

And I adjusted the angle so that all 7 of us could come out with our upper body costumes, and took the picture consecutively.

Like this, they picked out well among themselves excitedly.

Sure enough, there were some guys who were arguing again about which photos to upload.

“Now, isn’t photo number 3 the best? It’s better to see all 7 of us smiling~”

“My mouth looks weird. Use the next one!”

“Don’t listen to him. It’s unreasonable to use a photo where only one person comes out good.”

“A-All the photos came out great…”

Of course, Seon Ahyeon’s attempt to stop them didn’t work.

In the end, two photos were uploaded, one selected by Keun Sejin and one selected by Cha Eugene.

Lee Sejin looked at the process with a tired expression, then shook his head.

It seemed he had completely forgotten his complaints yesterday about posting something where he didn’t come out.

‘Haha, the team is doing really well.’

It was just a relief that it didn’t build up into a fight due to the camera.

Anyway, the first week of activities seemed to end like this.

‘…For now, I’m glad that the reaction to the stage was good.’

I checked it from time to time whenever I had free time. Both the number of views and the overall rating were great.

‘As expected, the correct answer was to shoot the choreography.’

In fact… Right before filming the music video, I invested the one remaining point into the dance stat.

It was because not only the vocal, but my portion on stage was also larger than I thought. It was probably the side effect of winning first place.

‘I have to move to the center a lot so it can’t be helped.’

I was agonizing about other stats until the very end, but for now, my judgment leaned toward the priority of covering up the weakest stat.

‘If I get mocking memes for no reason, it will be troublesome.’

Thanks to that, my current dance stat was ‘B-‘.

It meant I could just dance well.

‘Of course, I didn’t gain much because three of us are grade A.’

It was not an individual competition anymore, so let’s be satisfied with the leap to a level that contributed to quality.

…Well, it was fun to see fans enjoying Park Moondae’s fancams.

“Thank you for your hard work~”

“The first week of activities has ended successfully!”

Before leaving the waiting room, the members and staff congratulated each other with a smile. The manager added.

“Congratulations on being in the top 10 on the digital music charts~”

“Hahaha!”

Right. As the manager said, the songs were going up encouragingly well.

I thought of the 24Hits ranking screenshot that was posted in the group chat today.

[10th place Magical Boy ▲ 4]

[13th place Hi-five ▲3]

‘I guess there really is such a thing as a music show buff.’

What surprised me a little was that Magical Boy made a reversal.

Perhaps it was thanks to the stage, but the fact that the song didn’t get boring easily also played a part.

‘Because even the people who thought that High Five is loud all the time would think that ‘Magical Boy’ is fine.’

I was satisfied because my new characteristic for selecting songs seemed to be quite effective.

…Of course, VTIC was still at the top of the music charts. They were really great guys.

‘Hmm, is it impossible to win first place on the music show with this activity?’

Looking at the situation, it seemed the next album would be released within this year, and since the results of this album were good, I didn’t have to be nervous and worried.

…In the first place, it would have been better if there wasn’t this damn situation where sudden death was renewed.

Deep anger that I had forgotten in my busy schedule tried to rise, but I managed to suppress it.

Getting angry didn’t change the situation, so let’s calm down.

‘…Should I be satisfied with putting them on a smooth path?’

I shrugged and grabbed my bag. From next to me, I heard Ryu Chungwoo asking the manager.

“Then, shall we go straight to the dorm today?”

“Ah… Actually, I had an urgent meeting today.”

“Yes?”

“You guys wanted to be on a variety show. You’ll get a variety show!”

When the manager spoke brightly, several guys were hooked even in the midst of exhaustion.

“Oh~ what kind of variety show is this?”

“Is the variety show fun?”

The manager nodded proudly.

“It’s a program called <Working Man>!”

“…?”

“This is a new program launched by TVC, you know? All the variety shows made there are good~”

“Ooh!”

Several members nodded their heads as if they were tempted. The manager added more.

“It’s a variety show where you experience a unique job, and the PD is a good person, and everyone says they have high expectations. They said they really wanted to work with Testar, so let’s work hard!”

“…”

…Ah, I already had a feeling.

‘It was weird from the moment his tongue grew longer.’

TVC was a broadcasting station affiliated with T1. In short, since they were launching a new variety show within their own affiliates, they wanted to use Testar to make the headline.

In addition, it was a program that even I, who came from 3 years in the future, hadn’t even heard of.

‘You put us in because you think the program is going to fail.’

Since Testar hadn’t been able to win first place in other broadcasting companies, it was difficult to give a casting call to people from a cable audition, so it seemed they were fighting internally with the entertainment casting.

‘You can’t wait for that deal so you put our first variety show special there?’

It was ridiculous to see the company making a decision that had no productivity in the group because they were drawing a big picture.

However, the members who didn’t know answered the manager brightly and spiritedly.

“Yes!”

“All right!”

“…Yes.”

I eventually nodded, too.

Right. What else could I do with the camera there? It wasn’t like rookies had the right to reject a schedule, so let’s just stop talking and come back.

And just then, my eyes met Keun Sejin’s, who was smiling and nodding.

“…”

Looking like a di*k, his eyes were saying something different.

Later, when I sneakily asked him in the car, he said that the reaction to the first episode of <Working Man>, which aired just before, was devastating.

‘As expected.’

I thought I had given up enough expectations for the company, but it seemed I had unnecessarily regained them back while preparing for the album.

Let’s throw away some more.

* * *

“Hello~”

There was a camera at the meeting with <Working Human> as if the talk of our appearance with the agency was already over.

‘They’ve already set things up between themselves.’

“Let me ask you a few questions first.”

“Yes!”

The meeting ended in a hurry by exchanging about 10 questions and answers without a single greeting, probably because the next shooting was right around the corner.

Just like the title <Working Human>, it was a question that mainly asked what we wanted to do.

‘…It’s best not to work.’

However, I couldn’t write down these answers due to my current job, so I replied with a few moderately unusual jobs.

‘We’re in a hurry.’

The production team hurriedly collected all the questions and answers they wanted and ended the meeting.

It was obvious that they were busy to death.

‘The reaction to episode 1 isn’t good, so people’s opinions seem to be divided.’

Anyway, thanks to that, I was able to take the car back to the dorm before nightfall.

“Now, everyone, please raise your hand~”

As I dutifully waved my hand to Keun Sejin, who was taking a video to post on SNS, I felt a vibration in my pocket.

‘I have a bad feeling about this.’

After confirming that Keun Sejin finished taking videos and turning off the camera, I checked my smartphone.

[VTIC Cheongryeo sunbae-nim: I haven’t heard from you, so I’m texting you first. Is this Park Moondae-ssi’s number?^^]

“…”

Wow, this was really uncomfortable.

‘Are you secretly preying on a rookie just because he didn’t contact you first?’

I knew he didn’t take my number because he really wanted to get close to me.

Still, I couldn’t ignore it due to the annual ranking, so I sent a reply.

[I’m late to contact you because I don’t look at my smartphone often. I’m sorry, sunbae-nim.]

Then a reply came in an instant.

[VTIC Cheongryeo sunbae-nim: There’s nothing to apologize for, I just texted you to say hello.]

I was so tired.

I sent a short reply, roughly saying, ‘Okay, thank you’, and turned off my smartphone altogether.

‘I’ll be late checking the message tomorrow so let’s just replace it.’

It was annoying that strange kids kept popping out, how did they find it anyway?

Let’s change the status message while blocking contact with numbers that were not in the address book.

‘Anyway, today… Are we going home like this?’

Just as I was about to fall asleep in the car, I heard Ryu Chungwoo’s voice.

“Guys, the beats of our choreography are gradually changing, so shouldn’t we set it up since we have time?”

“…”

I immediately woke up.

Looking around, everyone had ‘I want to rest’ written on their faces. However, they couldn’t bear to refute what was right, so there was only an

implicit silence of agreement.

I held back my sigh.

‘…Going home, my ass.’

I should go practice.

* * *

While Testa pulled off the first week of murderous activities, fans were having a happy time with overflowing content.

That also served as Testar’s driving force to quietly follow the schedule.

– The first week’s cross-edited music shows came up on WeTube, and it’s really cool (link)

– This week’s reality show episode was so good! The kids doing their hair was so cute. I cried when they were seriously preparing for the stage. Let’s keep going for a long time, Testar

– CQ pictorial, interview, and behind-the-scenes. The magazines are all sold out. (link)

└Ah… I’m late…

└Take more pictures, please…

Since the contract with Testar was not short-term, the agency worked hard to create an atmosphere that favored the group itself rather than deliberately promoting individual competition among members.

And that effort tried to settle down well in the fandom.

The fact that the group used only one SNS and frequently uploaded photos of them together no longer created backlash.

However, it was not possible in one area.

It was the random photo card that went into the album.

Since it was a factor directly related to the album sales, the photo cards of the members, which were included in the album at random, were put in as it was according to the traditional tactic.

Thanks to this, people who wanted to curse at Testar were excitedly sticking to related comparison articles.

[Testar photo card unit price ranking]

: Cha Eugene>=Park Moondae>Seon Ahyeon>Kim Raebin=Keun Sejin>=Ryu Chungwoo>>Lee Sejin

+) The statistics are published by Secondhand World. I won't accept denial~ (link)

– As expected, Cha Eugene is in first place

– Ah, Park Moondae presented the ending center Was it good to sell your dead parents and get first place?

– Lee Sejin is really useless everywhere. Does he have anything else to do besides getting airtimes in music videos?

– Ryu Chungwoo's bubble finally burst. I knew he wouldn't have any core after seeing the final ranking

– Please stop pretending to be a popular guy, pretending to control the situation, and pretending to be a cheerful guy. Keun Sejin, unpopular members shouldn't seek attention

– Even with that face, Ahyeon’s limit is third place, I think it would have been better for him to choose a job where he doesn’t have to talk. Not an idol, but a picture model? Same thing!

No matter how much fans reported or ignored them, there was a limit. The jealousy and anger that poured out, which was ‘on the verge of going beyond imagination’, was at a level that was difficult to understand with common sense.

Because the ridicule was poured out on all members in all directions, a strange consensus was formed among fans.

– Let’s not feed these crazy people

– It’s been a long time since Idol Inc was over, and they’re still hung up on that? I’m sure they’re not the kids’ fans or a personal fan

└If they’re really a fan, does it make sense that they express themselves that way?

– You don’t have to be swayed by sick bastards who pretend to know it all just because they watched Idol Inc. We just have to look at the kids.

– That’s right, Testar is this good, so there’s no need to waste emotions on things like that. They’re just losers or agencies that don’t know anything.

Among them, the identity of a ‘group fan’ was slowly forming, not only as a formal expression.

And right around that time, a special event was coming up.

It was Testar’s first fan-signing event.

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CHAPTER 77

After reorganizing the choreography on Sunday evening, I collapsed and when I woke up, it was already the next week.

This meant it was time to check the first week's album sales.

The result was… Terrifying.

"…670,000 copies?"

"That's right!"

I asked the manager one more time.

"The sales volume, not the pre-order volume?"

"…No? Anyway, it is really the sales volume!"

"…"

For reference, pre-order volume referred to the number of pre-orders from retail stores in anticipation of the album being sold.

'I doubted it would be like this since we stepped in a lot in the beginning.'

670,000 copies were sold.

'I can't believe it.'

No matter how high the recent album sales inflation was, it was a sales volume that really made you feel paralyzed.

It was even more amazing when considering that Testar’s fanbase was formed mainly in Korea from the former audition program.

It was even bigger than it was originally.

‘Wasn’t it originally 600,000?’

Certainly, the initial release of the group that originally debuted with <Idol Inc.> had 600,000 copies. I couldn’t figure out where the hell the 70,000 came from…

“…I heard that our boy idol’s debut album sales are breaking a new record?”

“U-Uuuh…”

“Holy moly.”

The other guys were overwhelmed rather than happy.

If it had been 300,000 copies, I would have happily rolled on the floor, but when the double score came up, I felt a little scared.

Of course, the guys who came to their senses soon jumped out. This meant that they were starting to make realistic judgments.

“…Can we win first place next week?”

“…!!”

In an instant, the tension rose.

Ryu Chungwoo opened his mouth.

“How much is VTIC sunbae-nim’s sales volume this week?”

“Let me check.”

Kim Raebin immediately started searching.

Weekly sales could be checked immediately on the album chart.

“[LONG NIGHT / VTIC 312, 608]”

“…!”

“Wow.”

It was an unbelievable number considering it was the second week.

‘Even if it’s the last day of the initial release, it’s like that.’

It was at the level of total sales of boy idols that were just doing well.

Now that it came to this, I got curious about the initial release of this album.

“…Wait a moment.”

I tapped Kim Raebin’s smartphone screen several times to check VTIC’s album sales in the first seven days and initial releases.

[1,872,863]

“…”

Ah, it was hopeless.

“Wow~”

“Haha.”

“If we work hard, the day will come when we win first place!”

The tension instantly disappeared. Members began to laugh and cheer each other up.

I already expected it, but with such a difference in the basic score, the desire to win also disappeared.

Even if this total, which was twice as different from the album sales, came out at the perfect time, it seemed difficult because it was pushed back from the song.

‘After the initial period, there’s no chance the album sales will go well… It’s probably going to be tough even in the second week.’

Although the music ranking continued to rise, it was also uncertain whether we could push out VTIC which was stuck in first place.

I shrugged.

“Shall we get ready to go out?”

“That would be nice.”

“Today too, fighting~”

Members dispersed to change into outdoor clothes.

The manager said, ‘This isn’t it… ’ He murmured the same words several times but soon sighed deeply as if he had accepted the reality.

‘I guess you have different ideas.’

Well, he would take care of it.

It was right after getting in the car that the manager started again.

“Your fan signing event starts two days later, do you know that?”

“Already?”

The members were nervous. I heard about it at the beginning of the activity, but I forgot the date because of my busy schedule. The manager nodded.

“Yeah, they bought so many albums and cheered for you passionately. Do your best~ Treat them well with sincerity~”

“Ah, of course!”

Perhaps the reason why he talked about the album sales first was to lead into this topic. He seemed relieved to be able to say it now.

‘A fan-signing event.’

If I didn’t want to make a mistake while talking with a hundred people in a row, I needed to put in some spirit.

However, it seemed this had the opposite effect on some of the members. Because Seon Ahyeon’s face turned blue at once.

“I-I-I don’t think I can.”

“Why’s that?”

“Huh? I-I’m not good at talking…?”

“…? Hyung is good at speaking Korean right now.”

Seon Ahyeon, who was caught up in Cha Eugene’s nonsense, started to get more confused.

I sighed and interrupted.

“You’re cautious, so you won’t make a mistake. Don’t worry too much.”

“…T-Thank you.”

Seon Ahyeon replied with a faint smile, but it wasn’t an expression of someone who wasn’t worried.

‘It’s understandable.’

I hadn’t even talked much to fans in the first place.

I sometimes saw fans from close range as I went back and forth during schedules, but usually, we only exchanged greetings or fan services and quickly get in the car.

Sometimes, it wasn’t a fan, but a sasaeng who persistently followed us near the dorm or at the convenience store, so it was hard to make an example of it.

‘Any members would be nervous to have a one-on-one conversation… ’

“Time should pass quickly~ To see our fans’ faces.”

“…”

Except for him.

Keun Sejin in the front seat was humming and rummaging through his smartphone.

‘He’s confident.’

I never thought I would confirm an example of an idol’s polar opposite ahead of a fan-signing event like this.

…What about me?

‘I don’t know.’

If it was a famous idol public fan signing event, I had been paid a few times to take pictures as a substitute.

But I'd never heard what they were talking about while getting autographs.

This was because the place itself was more noisy than expected, so most sounds were muffled.

'Well… I've seen a lot of headbands.'

It was kind of embarrassing, but it couldn't be helped, so let's move on.

I clicked my tongue while looking at my brain, there was only a vague impression left. No content.

'Should I find out what kind of conversation they usually have?'

I was in the middle of moving, but there was no reality show camera in the car. I immediately logged in to SNS on my smartphone and started searching.

[Fan signing event review]

'Since I put 'review' at the end, I can roughly skip homemaster's pictures.'

However, before I could move to the popular posts tab, a recent article that just popped up caught my eye.

"…!"

Wait.

[Testar, 120 copies for this fan signing It's a workday, but it's crazy, really! I'm crazy… Please post more reviews of the fan signing event (photo)]

The image attached to the post was a screenshot of the certification message saying that 100 copies were bought.

"…"

120?

To be honest, I thought of this as soon as I saw it.

'…How much is this?'

The regular price of Testar's debut mini-album was 15,000 won. Even if the discount rate was raised through group purchases, etc… about 11,000 won would be the lowest price.

'Even if you calculate it… '

It was 1.32 million won.

"…Huh."

My brain spun.

'Even if the conversation is long, it would be a minute or two.'

Since there were seven Testar members, it meant that each person had to be worth more than 180,000 won.

'Isn't the efficiency too low?'

Can I make 1 minute of conversation worth 100,000? Of course, I'm not confident.

'Should I just… do whatever they ask me to do?'

Other than that, I couldn’t think of any special measures. I put down my smartphone and pressed my forehead.

Even though I had taken pictures of guys with more than 100 copies for fan signs, I never thought I’d become one of them.

I broke out in a cold sweat.

* * *

Park Moondae’s first homma arrived with full preparation at an art hall in Mokdong where the fan signing event was held.

The small stage and audience seats that could accommodate 300 people accepted 100 people on the waiting list without any difficulty.

And the waiting numbers were distributed.

[07]

‘Hooray, a front number!’

Murmuring that they would be able to talk before Moondae got tired, homma happily set up the camera quickly.

And when it was just past 7:30 pm.

From the side of the stage, Testar entered.

In an instant, deafening cheers filled the small art hall. Originally, the sound of taking pictures would have been heard first, but before that, the first fansign was filled with excitement.

Testar, who waved their hands and entered with slight embarrassment, bowed in front of the autograph table set on the stage.

“Take your STAR! Hello, we’re Testar!”

“Wooow!”

It was an official greeting befitting of a rookie who was not used to the fan signing event yet. The fans cheered enthusiastically, but on the inside, they were shouting for each member they were rooting for.

The same was true of Park Moondae’s homma.

‘Moondae, black hair! Ah, I love it!!’

She’d been to the pre-recordings several times so it wasn’t her first time seeing Park Moondae’s black hair, but she still liked it every time.

It might be because Park Moondae had black hair when she first became a fan.

‘Blonde hair is good too, but as expected, it has to be black.’

She briefly thought of her friend who was a stubborn blonde, but soon erased it and quickly focused on the camera.

She had to take a good picture and spread that face wide.

‘I think he gets more handsome every time I see him.’

Perhaps because of the album concept, Park Moondae had a strangely refreshing atmosphere with black hair and a white summer uniform as his current stage costume.

‘This is not a joke, it is the truth…!’

While she was muttering like that, the greeting ended and Testar slipped back to the table and sat down.

‘Moondae is at the last row.’

Homma murmured that it was a good idea to bring gifts to the other members just in case. It would be kind of weird if she walked with her hands full of gifts but she didn’t give them away until the last seat where Moondae was.

“Let’s start in order of numbers~”

Soon, the fan signing event began in earnest.

Because she got a front number, she could start getting autographs without waiting long. Moondae was about to meet his first fan.

The first in line was Ryu Chungwoo.

“Hello!”

“H-Hello.”

Seeing Ryu Chungwoo greeting first, Homma stuttered a little.

‘He’s handsome, too.’

She had seen him being called nicknames like the hot Confucian man on SNS, but seeing him up close, she could see why.

‘You look like an athletic student who will appear as the main character in a webtoon… ’

She shared a few light small talks, and after a high five, she handed over a small red ginseng box.

“Wow, thank you!”

“Ei, not it’s fine~”

The first sign ended warmly. And next.

“Where can I sign for you?”

It was child actor Lee Sejin. Lee Sejin, who had a delicate and neat impression, was not particularly active, but he wasn’t insincere either.

“Who are you here to see?”

Unexpectedly, he even asked a question first.

“I came to watch all Testar~”

“Is that so? Thank you.”

Lee Sejin answered calmly without being particularly sensitive and finished the autograph neatly.

‘It’s more refreshing than I thought.’

Somehow, the image that was renewed as she got an autograph from each person was good.

It was the same for the members who signed next.

“Um, then I will try to find a blank space that is as conspicuous as possible without covering the face…”

She also liked Kim Raebin, who signed shyly with a tense look contrary to his sharp impression.

“Which album cover do you like best? I love violet the best!”

She found it cute that Cha Eugene was more excited than the fan receiving the autograph and he put all kinds of graffiti around his autograph and threw a bombing question.

‘At the beginning of Idol Inc, I really hated him.’

She praised herself, saying it was a good thing that she didn’t say anything wrong at that time.

And then Keun Sejin appeared.

“Welcome~ How’s your first fan signing event today? I am really nervous!”

“I am nervous, too!”

“Ei, I don’t think you’re nervous~”

With a friendly tone, Keun Sejin asked her what she did during the day, how she was feeling, how she was doing now, and even her worries.

In addition, she didn’t say anything, but a high-five came out automatically.

“See you next time~”

“Yes…!”

‘…I think we’ve gotten closer?’

She felt like she had built an inner circle with a handsome business major. Although she vaguely guessed that the other person was friendly to all his colleagues.

While she was impressed by the popular guy vibe she felt from a conversation that was only two-and-a-half-minute long, her excitement went up at Moondae’s turn that would come soon.

‘Now, after this is Moondae…!’

So full of expectations, she was thinking of passing Seon Ahyeon quickly.

‘…That face is too great… ’

“N-Nice to meet you…!”

Seon Ahyeon smiled brightly and listened carefully to her words. Thanks to this, she got an autograph almost as if she had been possessed.

Seon Ahyeon even put a sincere P.S. underneath it.

[Thank you so much for coming today, Jiwon! We’ll work harder in the future and show you great things!*^^*]

‘…He really is a natural monument.’

That face and that personality. Even that character would be difficult to maintain.

…And now, what was left was the long-awaited favorite.

She gulped down and looked back at Moondae.

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CHAPTER 78

Moondae in the next seat was already staring at her with a weak smile.

“Hello.”

“…!!”

Conversation! The first conversation with Moon Puppy at a close range!

‘Gosh.’

Due to the tension that rose up all of sudden, the mouth that had been talking well until just now opened half a beat late.

Years of fansign experience were useless…

“H-Hello, Moondae.”

“Um, noona?”

‘Crazy!’

She had a complex feeling of wanting to beat herself up for suddenly speaking informally, as well as wanting to praise herself for being called older sister.

“That’s right!”

“Nice to meet you… Would you like some of this?”

“…!?”

Moondae quickly pulled something out from under the desk and handed it out.

…It was a lollipop.

It wasn’t just a manufactured product sold at a convenience store. It was big and cute and had pretty animal decorations, and it smelled like a specialty store.

“You’re giving it to me…?”

“Yes, it’s delicious.”

“…”

It suited his character somehow and tears welled up in her eyes.

‘W-Why are you giving me this… ’

He hadn’t received the payment yet, so he didn’t have any money, why did Moondae prepare something like this?

‘I think it would have cost me a fortune to buy 100 of those, too… ’

She almost sunk into her emotion while holding the candy, but fortunately, Park Moondae didn’t give her time to rest and spoke again right away.

“Is that mine?”

“Huh? Uh… Yes!”

She realized that she had reflexively taken out the flower crown when Moondae’s turn came.

She made up a conversation ‘I want to see you use a flower crown instead of chicken feet in the self-introduction video’ to request him… There was

no need to. Park Moondae grabbed the flower crown immediately and put it on his head cheerfully.

“…!”

“…Noona, are you taking a picture? I’ll keep wearing it, so don’t worry.”

Park Moondae signed an autograph for homma who was stunned.

“What’s your name?”

“Uh… My name.”

Homma was taken aback by the unexpected situation and it was only after the signing was over that she realized that she had given her real name, not her account name.

‘I was going to get it from Moondae under the account name…!’

However, this thought also evaporated at Moondae’s next words.

“Thank you for coming… It would have been nice if I had a more fun personality, but I’m not the type of person who is good at talking… Do you have any questions?”

“No, um…”

No, Moon Puppy! Your personality is funny enough!

…She wanted to answer but looking at the staff approach to shout ‘Let’s move’ she asked reflexively.

It was because she witnessed the staff continuously acting inflexible in front of her.

“W-What’s your MBTI”?

“I don’t know because I’ve never tested it, but I’ll try it and let you know.”

At the end of that fruitless conversation, she was forced to leave the desk at the beckoning of the staff…

No, she should have left already…?

“Wait a minute.”

She was still sitting at the desk.

This was because Park Moondae was holding her album down with one hand on purpose!

‘Uuh… ’

Park Moondae asked again as if nothing had happened.

“I couldn’t answer the previous one, so let’s say it’s invalid, do you have any other questions?”

In an instant, homma’s brain was restored

It was part of the conversation log that she had originally prepared.

“Moondae, we met when you wore a Welsh Corgi mask and did a billboard proof shot. Do you remember?!’

But her mouth… It moved faithfully to instinct and public interest.

“I-I-If you have one favorite food other than chicken feet, what would it be? I know you eat well!”

Park Moondae smiled.

“I like all kinds of chicken.”

“Ah, really?”

“Yes, I’ll buy it next time. What does noona like? Chicken feet?”

D-Did this kid just say he was going to buy it? And he just joked about chicken feet, right? Gasp.

But since there was no time, homma hurriedly gave an answer.

“I like chicken, too!”

“It seems we have similar tastes. That’s great.”

The homma, who tried to say ‘And I like Moondae better’, was blown away by Park Moondae’s friendly answer.

All the silliness she had prepared was blocked by this idol’s preemptive attack…

“Move! Come on!”

“Um.”

The staff tried again, and this time Park Moondae also obediently sent the album to the fan.

Barely coming to her senses, she held out one hand and cried out.

“Handshake, please!”

“Ah.”

Park Moondae immediately raised his hand, and instead of shaking her hand, he clasped it. Then he smiled and shook it.

“…!”

“Goodbye.”

“…Uh.”

Oh my gosh.

Oh my gosh!

She returned to her seat dazedly.

Then she sat down and thought.

‘It’s crazy, really… ’

How was he so calm and nice?

Even his vocalization was good, so the conversation went well without shouting at each other.

‘Because this is the first fan signing event, I knew you would be sincere! Like that! I didn’t know you’d be so good!’

It was really useless to prepare herself in case Moon Puppy turned out to be the type who was indifferent to things like this…!

She wanted to beat up everything and roar, but with superhuman patience, she picked up her camera instead.

‘That flower crown, I will definitely take the best cut.’

Her fighting power ran rampant. She silently operated the camera.

Through the viewfinder window, she could see Park Moondae wearing the flower crown.

But before she knew it, he was wearing a rabbit ear, a steady item for fan signing events. The white ears rose above the yellow flowers.

“Yes!”

It suited him!

Afterward, Park Moondae even received a cotton ball doll that looked just like him. Homma reflexively guessed the size with hawk’s eyes.

‘Is it about 20cm?’

Moondae seemed to hesitate a little and contemplate its location, but the doll was soon placed on top of his shoulder.

Cute!

All three items fit perfectly together. Fans with cameras everywhere shouted Moondae’s name and urged him to look at the camera.

“Moondae!”

“Moon Puppy!”

“Park Moondae, here!”

While the next fan was bringing the album, Park Moondae took advantage of that gap to find cameras directed at him like a ghost and made eye contact.

Of course, he had the time to look up to his former job.

‘Heol.’

But that time flew by in an instant.

Surprised by Park Moondae's accuracy in finding her camera, homma didn't realize why until she saw several fans getting autographs.

'You make the most of your time… '

He persistently held out so that the fans who received his autograph could spend all their remaining time until it was the next person's turn.

It was an obvious choice considering that he was last in the row.

'Our Moon Puppy… He was born under the stars of idols… I don't accept objection… '

It was an attitude of an idol who had worked for 10.000 years, homma was so moved.

Beyond the viewfinder, Park Moondae was now shooting with a money gun. Looking at Park Moondae among the fluttering fake money, she really wanted to put cash in all of his pockets.

'Don't retire and walk the path of money for the rest of your life.'

She thought warmly as she saw Keun Sejin and Park Moondae throwing fake money at each other's desks.

A problem arose after that.

This time, the fan who moved to get an autograph from Moondae was presenting… A yellow Welsh Corgi hat.

'Are you going to replace it?'

It was such a shame, but she already took some shots of the flower crown so it was time to be satisfied. She licked her lips and waited for Moondae to wear the Welsh Corgi hat.

As expected, Moondae took off the flower crown and the rabbit ear and then wore the hat.

But it didn’t end there.

Park Moondae put on the flower crown and the rabbit ear on it after enough time had passed to take several shots of him wearing the hat.

“…!!”

At that moment, Moondae’s remarks rang in homma’s head.

– I’ll keep wearing it, so don’t worry

…And Park Moondae really didn’t take out ‘a single item’ until the fan signing was over.

* * *

“…”

“…Sigh.”

After the fan signing event, the moving car was quiet. This was because the guys who were tired of talking to 100 people in a row were all stretched out.

Thanks to that, I could check the Internet quietly. I let out a small sigh.

‘…I’ve done everything I can for now.’

Still, I couldn’t say in good conscience that it was worth 100,000 won per minute.

I briefly recalled a few people.

– Can you poke your cheek…?

– Moondae, three kinds of aegyeo! Quick!

– Do you mind if I put this on for you!?

– Morning call! Can you give me a morning call?

Um, I already expected those requests through preliminary research. Thanks to that, I could clear it safely without panic.

‘I was a little embarrassed, but… It was worth it.’

Sometimes, there were people who tried to pick a fight because they didn’t like Park Moondae, but it was fine.

Well, they didn’t intend to punch me in the face.

Rather, I was more embarrassed by the people who kept giving back money in an attempt to impress Park Moondae.

‘Do they have to go as far as giving money…?’

I reflexively recalled the student who came wearing a Welsh corgi mask and did a three-line poem with ‘Park Moondae’, and soon realized what I was originally trying to do. Reaction monitoring.

“Um.”

Let’s turn on the smartphone.

First of all… Testar’s first fan signing event was trending in real-time on SNS.

‘I expected this to some extent.’

It was a private event, but because there were so many people who were interested, real-time articles were posted almost live.

– The kids' responses at the fan signing were crazy. They talked more than I did;; My family register was robbed by Cha Eugene

– I never thought the day would come when I said 'Ah really' from this side

– Ah, Testar, everyone was so nervous So cute! (short greetings video)

– Hey, who gave Ahyeon the monocle? I just want to say thank you. May your family be blessed for three generations (photo)

– Look at Chungwoo wearing a durumagi. He has to appear in a historical drama with thousands of billion episodes (photo)

Most of them were happy about the first fan signing event, and even though the fans who couldn't make it were sad, they were excited about the real-time content.

'I guess it's a good choice to suggest banning post-its notes.'

Since <Idol Inc.> had a lot of viewers, the group was basically getting a lot of attention.

It was right not to give room for anyone to manipulate and post it as they please.

'Thanks to that, there are no useless rumors on the surface.'

Instead, it seemed what I did became quite a hot topic, so I went to the trending post.

[#6 Moon Puppy's March]

…Let's take a look at one of the most liked articles.

: Aaah, everyone, look at Moon Puppy's march of what the fans gave him, he stacked a tower on his head Isn't he a puppy material that is completely attached to his own thing? (photo)

I noticed a photo of Park Moondae which was edited by attaching a series of cuts where all kinds of props were stacked on his head and body as the fan signing event progressed.

'…I think I wore up five layers at the end.'

It managed not to collapse.

I was a little bit regretful that I was so conscious of the 1.32 million won, but it was a relief that it made them smile.

Hmm, let's take a look at some more popular reviews.

– Park Moondae is really crazy, wow. The staff told me to move over, but he didn't hand let go and held hands with me until the end. Wow, I almost proposed

– Moondae even picked out my dinner Have I told you? I thought you were really my puppy

– Fan signing review (7) lastly, Moondae!

I asked to grant the wish of the winner of rock-paper-scissors, but I lost.

But Moondae took a quick look and changed his own and lost I thought my heart was falling

– To Moondae… I gave Moon Puppy a cotton ball… The best moment of the year… Moondae said it was soft and amazing, he took it with his own hands aaah (photo)

"…"

That… That doll called a cotton ball felt good to touch, so I kneaded it like a stress ball, and I even brought it to the car with me.

It was in my bag now.

Somehow it felt strange.

‘Isn’t it the person who received it who’s supposed to be thrilled…?’

Why is it the person who made the gift themselves who is thrilled?

Anyway, I was grateful and moved on to the next article. It was the most shared article.

– Ah, it’s Moondae’s first fan sign, so he prepared candies according to the number of people No, When did our puppy grow up to do things like this My sister keeps it as an heirloom! (photo)

‘…I bought it so they could get something to eat in case they got bored if they just sat down after signing.’

How come nobody was eating it.

Anyway, it was a good thing that they enjoyed it, but the post below it was a problem.

┗Ah… I was wondering what he gave you, it was candy? I thought he gave you something amazing…

┗? Do you know me?

┗No, but it’s so pitiful I have to say it I’m sure you spent a lot of money buying stocks, but you’re thrilled with the cost-effective idol who only gave you candy… Take care of your self-esteem

┗All the weird people are popping up; Blocked~

‘Hmm.’

I operated the tabs and looked around the Internet.

When I checked, for each popular post in the community, a similar anonymous account started posting bullshit. Judging from the timing, it was an organized move.

– Is it just me who feels he’s a little selfish? It’s the first fan signing event, but he’s the only one who prepared it like that;

– I want to make fun of the reluctant fans because I feel like they’re only getting their money back through lollipops

– Did he only give it to people who came to the fan sign? The stone steps up and categorizes the fans in the order of how much they spent their money… Sigh

– What’s the point of stacking up fan-signing items like that? It doesn’t look pretty… He just debuted in first place, but he’s not that popular, so I feel like he’s very self-conscious

I knew this would happen.

‘How can these bastards have the same pattern?’

However, after <Idol Inc.> which was like an inferno was over, it seemed they were scratching gently while looking around, as if to confirm whether their primary speech worked.

In fact, when the audition was over, it was fine ignoring these guys.

But it was a problem if they threw candles at people who were having fun.

‘Let’s solve it quickly.’

I clicked my tongue and turned on Testar’s SNS.

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CHAPTER 79

After Testar’s fan signing event became a buzz on SNS, some of Park Moondae’s fans were suffering from <Idol Inc.> PTSD because of the malicious accounts that came up belatedly.

– What’s wrong with them?

– They’re really going crazy… Sigh

– I feel like they’re conspiring from somewhere

The antis tried to incite public opinion against Park Moondae by spreading cleverly distorted logic in all kinds of communities.

The main arguments were ‘It’s selfish to prepare a gift alone’, ‘Miraculous cost-effectiveness that can be condescending with a lollipop’, and ‘uselessly seeking attention with fan signing items’.

Of course, there weren’t a lot of places where it worked properly, but the defense itself was mentally exhausting.

When the fans got emotional, the key to the event got caught.

– This is a good day, but what is going on

– I want to quickly clean up and go back to the fan signing event…

– I get tired every time

Just before panic turned to exhaustion.

There was an alarm notification on Testar’s account.

Hello, everyone

This is Moondae (puppy emoticon)

Here’s today’s settlement (photo)

The attached photos were Park Moondae’s selfies, each with separate fan-signing items that he had received. Looking at the background, it seemed he was in the car.

That wasn’t all.

An additional notification popped up immediately.

There’s more

Photos of other members with similar concepts were uploaded one after another.

Each of them exchanged the fan sign items they received and even took care of the color difference. It was almost embarrassing how well the photos were compositioned and professionally taken.

– ??

– Moondae?

– No, suddenly, how precious…

Before the fandom could react to the sudden content, an article came up again.

Next up is #Myself! (photo)

P.S. All seven of us will do it~ Please look forward to it ♡

It was a post with a selfie of Park Moondae taken with a V on the chin and Keun Sejin opened a package in the background.

They could see that the package contained colorful lollipops.

– Heol

– Crazy

Yes. In the first place, Park Moondae didn't plan this alone.

It was because he was wary of holding an event alone in the Testar fandom, which still had individual fandoms as its basis.

And of course, the first person he invited was Keun Sejin, who was full of confidence in the fan signing.

The fans were on fire in an instant.

– Is this a selfie bomb for real? Go ahead and explode more

– It reminds me of the doll mask event during Idol Inc Our kids are really good children. I love you!

– Look at his stunts to take care of all the fans who couldn't come to the fan signing event. This is the idol that survived Idol Inc

– I should've bought 120 copies, so kind

And Park Moondae's fans felt at ease.

Because now, no matter what kind of bullshit came out, they could beat it up and drive it out.

– I don’t think it’s good to see Park Moondae doing that alone

┗Yeah, Keun Sejin will do it tomorrow~ They all planned it together as a relay! Isn’t it nice to see them overflowing with love for Testar fans♡ (photo)

– What is that;; If he did that at the fan signing event, the people who gave him the item would lose their energy. He was just stacking it on his head.

┗He made the time to wear them one by one and take a picture! And he uploaded each item separately? Even with the other members all together Do you want to see it together? (kink)

In this way, those people could quietly disappear or meet ‘This comment has already been deleted’, needless to say for a longer period of time.

– Ah, the cider tastes good.

– Moon Puppy, here’s another bowl of cider!! (bang!

– Get off, ah it’s fun

– Moon Puppy is a genius, I don’t accept objections

– Moon Puppy has to report his survival through selfies every day, not posting is against the law

Fans ran excitedly to the fan signing the next day and were able to sleep sweetly with refreshed hearts.

– Keun Sejin gave me a bubble toy lol

– The fan sign event site suddenly became the Magical Boy set

– It’s so cute. Following Moondae’s candy, Keun Sejin also chose something that suit his personality (photo)

And in the festive atmosphere, a great conflict came to many people.

The agency announced an additional fan signing schedule with the intention to take advantage of this opportunity.

– Next fan signing event schedule. (link)

└Is it true they grab this after the initial release? The agency is really… Crazy

– The additional fan signing event is in this weekend. I really want to go

– Don’t you really have to go to the fan sign at least once?

– It seems the next album will go up even more now, or maybe I should break my saving account

No one knew yet that after a while, the additional fan sign event, which reached 180 copies, would drive everyone crazy, including the fans and the singers.

* * *

Rattle.

My body moved and I woke up. I heard a voice from the front.

“…Hmmm, have we arrived?”

“There’s still some time left.”

“Yes…”

A conversation between Ryu Chungwoo and the manager passed through my sleepy mind.

‘…Right.’

I was in the middle of moving.

I thought I would fall asleep again if I stopped thinking for a bit, so I moved my body.

First of all, I turned on my friend’s smartphone.

[Friday 4:35 AM]

‘It’s been two and a half hours… since we started.’

The schedule was really amazing. I brushed my head.

‘I was relieved that there is no pre-recording this week, so why are we filming the variety show so early in the morning?’

I never imagined that I would have to go all the way to Gyeongsang-do. Thanks to that, I couldn’t even touch the settlement of the fan signing event yesterday.

‘Should I post something?’

I was a little conflicted as I accessed Testar’s account on my smartphone, and I uploaded some group photos taken at the dorm.

This is Moondae. (puppy emoticon)

Testar’s matched pajamas. (photo)

‘…Hmm. It seems too much.’

Looking at it, I wondered if someone else’s pajamas actually mattered.

Many people asked idols to share TMI, but they often got disappointed when they solved it, so I had to choose the right information.

‘I’ll have to look at the reaction and adjust the range.’

As soon as I finished uploading, there was a sign of movement from next to me.

“Um…”

Seon Ahyeon opened his eyes in a half-dreaming state and was startled when his eyes met me, who had completely woken up.

“-! H-Have we arrived?”

“No.”

“Uh…”

“Sleep more.”

After saying that, I also closed my eyes.

There were still two hours left until we arrived, so I was going to sleep a little more.

Because of his personality, it was clear that he wouldn’t be able to sleep if the person next to him was awake.

“…”

However, when I closed my eyes, I had already arrived at the destination. Fatigue ate up the time.

In addition, an extraordinary demand awaited.

“We can’t?”

“Yes. Your reaction when you find out what kind of job you will experience for a day is important.”

“Um, I see~”

Thanks to the manager who stepped in and organized it, I had no choice but to wear a blindfold. In the meantime, my eyes were thoroughly blocked so that I couldn’t see the outside at all.

It didn’t matter, but when I put on blindfolds on the guys who were already sleepy, some of them seemed to be out of their minds.

Cha Eugene, who was on the verge of dozing off, came to his senses only after being poked in the side.

“Ugh… Oh!”

“Come on, let’s go!”

As it was, we moved in a hurry according to the instructions of the production team.

“Now take off your blindfold~”

“Yes!”

And the sight I saw after taking off the blindfold…

It was a lake and a field.

“…??”

‘What’s this.’

Of course, I wasn’t the only one perplexed.

“…I’m awake, right?”

“Where are we?”

Before I could say anything more, some sort of mobile banner appeared in front of Testar.

[Congrats! National stock ★ Testar ★ Drop by!]

[Korean birds welcome you!]

[in Junam Reservoir]

A colorful picture of a bird fluttered.

“…?!”

Underlined Gothic font flashed.

“…??”

When I turned my head, Lee Sejin was looking at the banner with his mouth open. It looked like he couldn’t accept the situation.

And before anyone could say anything, a kind-looking elderly man appeared with a smile.

“Hello, everyone~ I’m Kim Jeongwon, a bird researcher!”

“Ah, hello!”

“Hello!”

As if the survival filming experience hadn’t gone anywhere, everyone came to their senses in an instant and put their heads together.

‘…I’m wide awake.’

But they still didn’t understand the situation.

The bird researcher smiled and offered a handshake.

“I heard that you’re going to experience bird research here today~”

“Yes? Yes. We are doing a one-day job experience…”

“Yes yes. That’s right~ Let’s do the basic work of a bird researcher with me today~”

“Bird research…?!”

When the unimaginable job popped up, everyone was taken aback. But the bird researcher didn’t care.

“Oh, they are very attractive friends. We will have time to observe them more closely today.”

“Uh…”

“We will be taking pictures of migratory birds today!”

“Gasp.”

The cameras were distributed in an instant. Testae came to their senses only after receiving the items handed out in an orderly manner by the staff who brought the banner.

“Y-Yeah!”

“Birds are great!”

“I’ll do my best!”

The bird researcher laughed with satisfaction.

“Haha! They’re young friends, so they have good energy~”

“Hahaha!”

At last, a harmonious laugh broke out. Seon Ahyeon seemed relieved and quietly spoke to me with a slightly excited look.

“I-I think it’s going to be fun…?”

“Yeah. Moondae is good at taking pictures!”

“…”

These guys… Of course, but they didn’t know.

However, after checking the camera, I managed to change my answer.

“…It must be worthwhile.”

“Haha, right!”

Right, indeed, it would be worthwhile…

I remembered the tearful story I heard from a senior in my club whose name I didn’t even remember.

– F*ck, if you want to take pictures of migratory birds, it must be winter.

– In the summer… there aren’t many migratory birds.

– It was so hot I was going to die…

“…”

I was already worried about whether these guys would be able to appear sane on the afternoon music show.

“Hahaha! Then let’s move!”

“Yes!”

The laughter of the bird researcher sounded like a professor capturing a master’s degree. Testar guys, like undergraduates who didn’t know anything, followed the researcher.

“Wow, the weather is nice!”

“It’s bright now because the sun has risen up early.”

I silently moved my feet, listening to the conversation of those who would soon be desperate for shade.

And I kept moving.

…I continued moving.

“…?”

Ryu Chungwoo took the lead among those who were perplexed by the endless march.

“Mister?”

“Yes?”

“Um, how much further do we have to move?”

The bird researcher smiled brightly.

“Haha! You have to walk until you see a migratory bird!”

“…!”

“Oh, when will we be able to see it?”

Keun Sejin quickly stepped in. The bird researcher waved his hand.

“Oho~ Only God knows that~”

“…!!”

Just before the guys who grasped the atmosphere could freeze, Keun Sejin quickly opened his mouth again.

“As expected, right? Still, God bless me with good luck, I hope I can see it soon. Haha! Right?”

It was a signal not to ruin the atmosphere of the entertainment show and to laugh.

“Ahaha!”

“You’re right.”

The atmosphere was forced to become friendly again. And then the march continued.

Trudge.

Endless reservoirs and greens followed.

If I kept walking like this, it would not be an entertainment show, but an experience documentary.

Fortunately, Keun Sejin was constantly talking to the bird researcher to get his portion. As if it suited the elderly's taste, the conversation went well.

"That's why Korean crow-tits are like this in the summer~they're so thin."

"Ah~ then the pictures we usually see on the internet aren't summer ones!"

Thanks to this, I just had to react while moving.

'You're properly paying for your meal… '

However, no matter what he said, what kind of portion would come out if the answers kept returning to the story of Korean crow-tits… I didn't know.

And at some point.

The bird researcher raised his arm.

"The~re, do you see the willow tree? There's a bird!"

"Ooh!"

"Wow!"

Faces brightened in an instant at the thought that the march was finally over. Cha Eugene openly tried to run towards it.

"Oh, don't get too close! Birds run away!"

"Oh, yes…"

At Cha Eugene, who was trying to walk carefully again, the bird researcher smiled and grabbed his shoulder.

"Come on, let's sit down and move~"

“…”

After a while.

Everyone began to move forward while squatting.

‘What kind of training camp experience is this?’

I think I know why the first episode of this entertainment show was ruined.

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CHAPTER 80

As a result of all of us, including the production, crouching down and moving near the summer migratory birds with extreme caution, we were finally able to pick up a camera.

But this ‘near’ was… It was a relative concept.

“Oh, here?”

“Of course~ It’s better not to approach it any further.”

It was a distance where the bird could not be seen properly with the naked eye.

Ryu Chungwoo, who was looking at the camera from next to me, muttered awkwardly.

“Um, I’d rather shoot the bird…”

“…?”

It was an idea that only a gold archery medalist would do.

In the meantime, Cha Eugene, who had been touching the camera noisily from the side, pressed the shutter hard.

‘…I think it’s not even focused.’

I didn’t know. It was already a mess. I sighed and picked up the camera I had received.

‘This reminds me of the old days.’

I didn’t have money, so I rented club equipment to take pictures. After making some money, I received cheap used equipment from my graduating senior in the club.

I fiddled around with the low-end camera and set the exposure value.

‘Where… if you pull it up a bit.’

The control and resolution were not so bad. There were a few cuts that could be roughly used.

It was a small blue bird with a white belly. It was throwing branches with its beak as if to show that it had a violent personality.

…But I didn’t know what species that bird was.

‘Matching a camera model would be easier.’

With a sigh, I approached the bird researcher and asked quietly.

“I think I took it, but I don’t know what species it is.”

“…?! A-Aha~ Is that so?”

The bird researcher’s eyes widened, and soon he complimented me, saying that I was fast.

‘…I think this guy freaked out just now?’

But before I could think of anything else, the others stepped in.

“Oh~ As expected, Moondae!”

“I want to see it too.”

“H-How is it?”

When I handed over the camera to the people who were gathering and talking quietly, they began to admire it with excitement.

“I-It came out well. I-It’s cute.”

“As expected, Moondae is talented.”

“It’s cool!”

“Sir, what bird is this?”

The bird researcher raised his index finger.

“…Figuring that out is your goal today, my friends!”

“Aha!”

“After taking pictures of the migratory birds, we will have time to look at the photos and find out~ Now, let’s move again~”

“Yes?”

“We don’t have much time, so let’s take pictures of various migratory birds in various places!”

“Yes…”

And then the forced march started again.

‘Looks like it’s ruined.’

I couldn’t find joy in this atmosphere even if I washed my eyes and searched for it. I sighed and got up from my seat. Seon Ahyeon, who was still looking into my photo, hurriedly returned the camera.

“H-Here.”

“Um.”

As I took the camera, I took a picture of Seon Ahyeon without much thought.

“…!”

“I think it came out well.”

Seon Ahyeon certainly received natural light well. I would have to pick it out and upload it on social media later.

“M-Me too…”

“Thanks, but I am okay. Let’s move.”

“H-Hn…”

I was starting to feel sleepy again. It seemed it was because the expectation I had for the filming were all gone.

‘Is this the end of the walk?’

…Was it that thought that caused all the problems?

“Then… I think it would be okay to get closer to the bird over there. Let’s go.”

“Yes!”

Five seconds after approaching the big white bird on the shore at the instruction of the bird researcher.

Suddenly, the bird flapped and rushed with a shriek.

“…!?”

“Oooh.”

“H-Hold on!”

Literally, we were scattered in an instant to avoid the bird who was chasing us like crazy.

The bird began to chase after Cha Eugene and Kim Raebin, who were the closest.

*‘F*ck”*

What kind of mess is this?

“Sir! What should I do!?”

“*HELP*!!”

“No, usually birds are very wary, so this is rare… How amazing!”

“Aaaaa!!”

Cha Eugene rolled away from the bird looking like he almost cried. There was nothing more hellish than this.

And I realized the situation.

The bird… was running?

“…”

I approached the ‘bird researcher’ and talked to him.

“…Is this fake?”

“Yes?”

“That’s not a bird.”

At that moment, the big bird that attacked Cha Eugene shouted.

“Got you!”

“…!!”

At that moment, the bird’s head snapped, and a human face popped out from within.

“Hee!!”

The mask was realistic, so it was kind of gross. Cha Eugene’s reaction was completely understandable.

“Tada! This is <Working Man>, Kwak Jungwon’s prank show!”

“Huh…”

Cha Eugene melted down on the ground.

The woman wearing a new mask shouted in surprise.

“Aigoo, what should I do!”

* * *

After a while, I moved to a cafe near the reservoir under the guidance of the smiling production team.

The MC apologized as soon as she sat down.

‘This is the show’s common rule.’

“No, they seemed the most fearless, so I chased them… I’m sorry, you both seemed so surprised.”

“…It’s okay…”

“It was scary.”

Kim Raebin received the apology with a bewildered expression, but Cha Eugene still sat as far away from the MC as possible and hid behind the members.

I just wish you stopped pulling my clothes. I was choking.

‘You watched horror movies well.’

As expected, it seemed his experience was another story.

In any case, the MC seemed to think the situation was settled enough, so she brought out the filming.

“As you may have realized by now, our <Working Man> is actually a full-fledged surprise camera broadcast~”

“Aah…”

The MC laughed as she watched Testar clapping with groans.

“T-Then the first episode is…?”

“We even tricked the viewers through the preview episode! Actually, <Working Man> is just an abbreviation, and the original title is… <Man who only needs to say it once>!”

(TL notes: ‘Man who only needs to say it once’ = the actual Korean words are slang referring to when someone says a joke and then the joke is

repeated again to the point it stops being funny. You say this slang when you tell them to stop repeating the joke.)

“…?!”

Seon Ahyeon opened his mouth wide. And I almost bit my tongue, too.

‘I think I’ve heard of that name.’

I didn’t expect to be the first cast member to be fooled by the name change.

“Now, how does it feel to experience the true title of <Working Man>, <Man who only needs to say it once> for the first time?”

In an instant, words came out like a flood.

“That banner! You made it like that on purpose!”

“I was wondering why I had to walk so much!”

“We didn’t even need to squat walk, right?”

“Ahaha! It’s all right~ It’s all right~”

The MC laughed and happily drank coffee. I sighed and added a word.

“Was the bird researcher fake, too?”

“Of course! He’s a great actor.”

“That’s why it was weird! He kept talking about Korean crow-tits!”

Everyone, including the production team, burst into laughter at Keun Sejin’s words.

“No, in the first place, this is where you take pictures of migratory birds in the winter~ You don’t have to come all the way here to take pictures of migratory birds in the summer. They live by spreading. In Gyeonggi-do, too!”

“Ah…”

It was the first time I saw Ryu Chungwoo suffer from embarrassment so openly like that.

I sipped my drink in silence. If I didn’t, I thought I’d be like that too.

Fortunately, the agency was no fool, the MC continued to chat for quite some time about the album and Testar’s activities afterward.

Although Ryu Chungwoo was suffering, he answered sincerely for publicity.

‘I’m glad I’m not the leader.’

As expected, I had to avoid the high position that only had responsibilities.

Anyway, after that small talk, we were able to shoot one of the title tracks.

Receiving applause from the staff after performing at a rural cafe was a unique experience in its own way.

“Oh, my God, it was so cool! As expected, you passed the audition!”

“Whoa, thank you!”

The MC smiled brightly as she watched Testar bowing their head in all directions.

“Thank you for starting today’s show in a fun way!”

“We really appreciate it!”

“It was fun!”

The ending was heartwarming. It was a variety show, so they couldn’t not end it on a warm note.

At the last minute, Cha Eugene also came to his senses and nodded.

“I’m scared of birds.”

“Hahaha!”

The MC must have thought it was a joke and laughed, but Cha Eugene must have been sincere.

‘Well… It won’t get caught so it doesn’t matter.’

He was not the kind of guy who would notice what I was trying to say.

Then, the MC received a signal from the production team and continued to talk, slapping her palms.

“Now, everyone! We’ll give you the daily wages we were supposed to give you~”

“Yes?”

“Expensive lunch! I brought as much as everyone’s daily wages~”

“…Ooh!!”

“Heol!”

Grill plates and Korean beef appeared.

All the bad feelings were washed away. It was the power of beef.

“Eat a lot!”

“T-Thank you!”

The members sat in front of the beef with puzzled expressions. There was still a sense of doubt about whether or not this was also another prank.

But nothing happened, and the Korean beef sirloin steak was the most delicious thing I’d had in the past half a year.

‘…This is fine.’

Considering that I even received an appearance fee, it was a profitable schedule.

‘Though, it might be different for Cha Eugene who got a direct hit.’

But shortly afterward, Cha Eugene whispered.

“She’s a good person.”

“…Right.”

As I responded to the sincere words of Cha Eugene who was satisfied, I didn’t have a clue what kind of entertainment all these skits would consist of…

‘…I don’t know.’

It was fine as long as I didn’t get cursed at. I took the meat into my mouth.

At the front, the manager was signaling to the members to please stop eating, but no one except Seon Ahyeon cared.

* * *

And then, on a Sunday afternoon.

The second week of Testar's music show was over.

Fans were delighted to see that costumes that didn't appear in the MV were appearing on music shows and events.

– The light pink summer uniform in Music Night is a legend… (screenshot)

– See the power of the black baseball uniform that pierces the valkyrie and quickly become a fan of Testar. If you become a fan now, you can become a fan without having to buy stocks (video)

– Testar's Park Moondae 2X0630 Oseong Event (photo) he was wearing Oseong Bears baseball uniform He also got number 11 on his back too!

Complaints that the agency was bad at their job broke out sporadically, but overall, it was a fun atmosphere to enjoy content-rich activities without major incidents.

However, there were many people who were thirsty for entertainment.

– Reality show is good but I hope they can come out on some large-scale variety shows as well

– I want to see them being cute on a talk show…

– All of our kids have characters, so they're great when they appear, but why isn't there any news?

In this situation, the news of 'Testar' appearing in an entertainment program that no one had ever heard of before was spread through articles.

[National stock Testa, their first variety show is TVC’s new <Working Man>]

[Who’s the first guest of <Working Man>? <Idol Inc.>’s Testar.]

– ??

– What kind of variety show is this?

– Is it misinformation?

– A new work?

However, SNS was soon filled with the anger of the people who came to see the first episode, which had a preview on WeTube.

– T1 is trying to use our kids to promote their nonsense program.

– Episode 1 is no f*cking fun. Are you crazy?

– It’s already rumored to be a failure among those who watch entertainment shows

– This really can’t work… Sigh…

Of course, it didn’t last long. Because if they lamented it openly, they would unnecessarily feed the agro.

Therefore, there were a lot of lamentations that couldn’t be searched right below the surface, and this kind of reaction had become a trend in the article’s comments.

– Wow! Testar will come out and make this program a hit!

– Testar, I’ll finally see you on another show, not on a reality show

– Let’s watch it live~

Of course, this was done step by step in case it exploded like an active volcano.

However, before the fans’ anger could subside, the preview of the second episode of <Working Man> appeared that night.

[Preview of <Working Man> Episode 2]

: It’s here! (link)

– Already?

– Isn’t it a Thursday broadcast?

As the bewildered people clicked on the link, this title popped up.

[Sorry! Actually, the name and the first episode were also to fool you! A PRANK show that is serious about fooling <Man who only needs to say it once> The first guest is Testar! Episode 2 preview]

The thumbnail showed the members of Testar who stiffened at the sight of the out-of-world emotional banner.

– ???

– What’s this

– ?

People were confused but rushed to click play.

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CHAPTER 81

The preview of <Working Man> episode 2 that suddenly appeared.

When it was played, the sound of a music box could be heard first.

♫♪♩♪-♫♪♫♪-♪♩-

Right. It was Testar’s Magical Boy.

But because of the weird modulation, it sounded like BGM for some kind of gag.

[Ding ↗ Ring ↘ Ding ↗ Ding ↘ Ding]

On top of it, the colorful banner and Testar’s bewildered faces overlapped in a close-up.

[Keun Sejin:… I’m awake, right?]

As soon as he finished speaking, a huge caption appeared.

[↑Plan to keep doubting whether this is real]

And right away, a bird researcher appeared. Behind the benevolent smile, the CG of burning hell fire was synthesized.

[Bird researcher: We will be taking pictures of migratory birds today!]

[Testar: ????]

Above the bewildered Testar, violently swaying captions were poured in along with heavy metal sounds.

[A professional suddenly appears! (※Fake)]

[Taking pictures of migratory birds suddenly begins! (※Fake)]

It was meant to make anyone who saw it laugh.

However, as the cut changed, the atmosphere became grim.

[But Testar is not easy!]

A short scene was overlapped under red flashing captions.

[Former national archery representative: If this is about shooting (the birds), I would do it.]

[Seon Ahyeon: (Pupils shaking)]

Seon Ahyeon’s frightened face was slowly zoomed in as he grabbed the camera tightly at Ryu Chungwoo’s calm words.

Then, all of sudden, the cut of Testar seriously squatted down as a group showed up.

[Bird researcher: Let’s approach it quietly~]

[Testar: Clatter (Serious about the shoot)]

The cut of the tall boys holding their breath and moving while squatting down continued without BGM.

[(Overly immersed)]

And the scene where Park Moondae carefully picked up the camera and took a photo was naturally inserted.

[Park Moondae: (Cli-ck)]

But when he pulled back the camera, he was taking picture of Seon Ahyeon, not a bird.

[…??]

The caption was puzzled.

And from that quiet cut, another cut of Testar screaming while running away like a madman showed up out of nowhere.

[Testar: Argh!!!]

[Bird researcher: It’s fascinating]

[Testar: Gyaaaaaa!! (it roughly means I won’t leave the broadcasting station guys alone)]

The handy cam shook like crazy.

[Cha Eugene: *Help*! (Help!)]

The caption flashed. There was no movie more disastrous than this.

[First variety show filming that should have been peaceful!]

[An unprovoked disaster hits Testar!]

[What will be the fate of Testar?]

A modulated voice came out of the MC’s mosaic face.

[??: Aigoo, I’m sorry!]

And on the black screen, a huge golden caption popped up.

[The MC and production team who are serious about *prank*!]

[<Working Man>]

[<Man who only needs to say it once>]

[July 5th, Thursday at 11 pm!]

Magical Boy’s modulated sound flowed out again, and the screen finished magnificently.

“…”

These guys too… They were out of their mind.

“Puhahahaha!!”

Keun Sejin, who was watching from next to me, rolled around the living room.

This guy burst into laughter from the moment the stupidly transformed Magical Boy BGM came out and ended up like this.

I admitted it.

‘…It’s fun.’

Like in <Idol Inc.>, they were creating a context that didn’t exist through editing, but it wasn’t just a couple of days that this happened so I gave up.

‘It’s not a composition that will cause a controversy, so it’ll be fine.’

Just… They seemed serious about being funny.

Still, it was ridiculous that the agency used the first entertainment show card as a tie-in instead of a deal, but apart from that, it seemed the fans would enjoy it.

‘If we maintain our form, we can get through the variety show on public TV next time.’

Thinking that it was roughly a pass, I looked through the current reaction.

– What did I see? (photo of being sucked to the universe)

– ???? ??

– I think I’ve lost it Oh my God

-The state of Testar’s first variety show…? (attachment)

When I clicked on the GIF file attached to the last comment, a picture of a wild goose inhaling and emitting a laser was played.

By the way, the lasers were emitted from its eyes as well.

“…”

In a sense… You could say that they made a very intuitive prediction.

I recalled Cha Eugene did exactly that when the bird’s neck broke.

“Hahaha! Our fans are so cute!”

Keun Sejin, who got up and rested his head, smiled at the comments.

Then, he touched the screen however he wanted to watch a related video.

…This was a business tablet for sponsorship.

Be patient.

“Hey, let’s watch this, too. This one is hilarious.”

“What is it?”

When he held the screen in front of my nose, my eyes automatically checked the video.

[Testar Animal Kingdom: Episode Park Moondae Exploring Moon Puppy’s Life ZIP <Testar’s Living Together TEST> EP.3]

“…”

In the meantime, the 5-second naturally ended and the content came out.

[Blow~ Blow~]

The rustic opening that seemed to come out of animal entertainment in the 1990s was parodied into Testar and passed by.

What came out immediately after was… Park Moondae in puppy pajamas.

…I got it as a gift, so I wore it sometimes when I washed all my pajamas.

‘…It’s kind of weird seeing it on the screen.’

Regardless of my embarrassment, a voice I often heard in dubbed foreign documentaries flowed out in the video.

[Wild wolves hunt in packs. They live in nuclear family units and are social animals.]

[But here, this individual is a puppy, not a wolf.]

[He has learned the habits of the cold city while living with humans.]

The screen fast-forwarded to the scene of Park Moondae, wearing a pajama and sitting on the sofa in the living room.

He didn’t move an inch even though all kinds of housemates were busily coming back and forth.

Cha Eugene and Keun Sejin approached, waved their hands, sat next to him, and turned on the TV, but he remained the same.

[This individual has evolved to not lose energy in a small social life.]

‘…I am sure I had responded to them?’

I probably stayed still out of exhaustion since I barely had time to exercise and wash up in-between breaks. The familiar smell of fabrication was very friendly.

[However, like a puppy, he likes humans. He’s particularly favorable to humans of the same group.]

“…?”

Come again?

On the screen, Park Moondae suddenly got up and disappeared into the kitchen.

And appeared with soda.

[Let’s see where his favor is successfully delivered to.]

Park Moondae first showed the plastic bottle to Ryu Chungwoo, who was passing by, but he was politely rejected.

[The first attempt is a failure.]

‘I was just asking if he would like to drink it…?’

Do you even need to call it a failure?

No, in the first place, wouldn’t any adult with a brain make that kind of gesture?

But regardless of my distraught mood, the narration diligently came up with bullshit.

On the screen, Park Moondae trudged back to the living room with a plastic bottle and handed over the drink while being warmly welcomed by Cha Eugene and Keun Sejin.

The edits seemed to emphasize that a hunt had been successful.

[Ah, he has succeeded this time.]

[He receives gratitude from the humans.]

The video ended with a cut of Park Moondae receiving half-empty soda back and putting it in his mouth.

[It’s the time when Testar Puppy and individual Park Moondae is living in Seoul]

[Ta-da!]

“…”

I was speechless.

I was so busy that I couldn’t shoot the content for the reality show, and now that the filming of the music video was over, they aired something like this.

Keun Sejin giggled again.

“It’s funny, right? Honestly, it’s funny, right?”

Yeah. Everyone had a good laugh.

The best top comment was this.

– Perfect

There were 4,000 ‘likes’ stamped on this list of .

There were many laughing comments below that. Everyone looked really happy.

Of course, not all of them were like that. Let’s look at other best comments.

– Moon Puppy is official, the Tibetan fox is heresy

– Everyone, Moondae has always been sincere about puppies, from mukbang to doll masks to pajamas. Let’s be a fan who respects Moondae’s choice.

– Have you lost it with the animal kingdom BGM It looks as if the puppy was hunting for the plastic bottle with excitement!

– Yes, our Moon Puppy, let’s be a puppy forever♡

– The Tibetan Foxes will not forget the silent oppression of the broadcasting station. We will come back…

ㄴ

“…”

The image of Park Moondae that I had used to survive the survival show was distorted into the image of being obsessed with dogs… I felt like I could hear my 29-year-old self screaming.

‘…Well, people like it, so it’s fine.’

A few days ago, I also used moving puppy ears at the fan signing event. The time had come for the civil service examinee to give up.

“You’re not mad, are you? Right? Then, I’ll play my video to make it fair.”

Next to me, Keun Sejin laughed and automatically played the next video.

There was a hint of the content in the title.

[Testar Animal Kingdom: Lee Sejin B The ‘Sociable’ Big Bear ZIP Testar’s Living Together TEST EP.3]

‘Sociable.’

The content was a special feature about Keun Sejin, who got along well with anyone whether it was with this guy or that guy.

It is edited with a good proportion of humor and warmth.

“But honestly, yours is funnier than mine… Hey, hey!”

This bastard only took good things for himself and made fun of people.

I handed the tablet to him and lay down on the bed.

I should make the most of my hard-earned break, not waste it watching stuff like that.

“Hey, monitor me, too~ Are you going to sleep?”

What monitoring, you laughed at Park Moondae’s video just now.

“Yeah. You should go to sleep, too.”

“Ah~ You’ve slept in the car too. If you have time like this, you should use it well~”

This guy didn’t even have a status window, there was no way to know where all that stamina came from. I slept for only three hours yesterday.

Then, for some reason, I got support from my roommate.

“…He said he’s going to sleep. Get out. You’re noisy.”

Lee Sejin, who was already lying down to sleep, piped in. It was clear that he had been enduring it.

Keun Sejin stared at the person who shared the same name without answering, then he just laughed.

“Ah, sure, well. Good night, hyungnim~”

Then, when our eyes met, he pretended to shake his head, then shrugged and left the room.

‘That guy seemed a little annoyed too.’

It was obvious that he intentionally surrendered lightly so that they didn’t fight when the reality show camera was running

‘They don’t seem to understand each other.’

That didn’t seem quite right. If we changed rooms later, we shouldn’t put those two together.

As soon as I thought so, I got a notification on my smartphone.

[Keun Sejin: Come out! The time is now!]

“…”

[Go to sleep.]

I sent a short reply and turned off the phone. And I started to sleep.

At this time, I didn’t know what would happen to Testar’s first variety show.

* * *

[Testar’s first variety show video is crazy]

[Working Man Episode 2 Preview (feat. weak cheek)]

[Testar’s variety show where everything is fake]

The preview video, which was edited like crazy, naturally became a popular post in the entertainment community.

– Heol so funny

– Wow I thought it was going to fail, but these are the guys who came through Idol Inc

– The scratching comments that pretend to be worried about Testar appearing there are all gone

– The fans must be happy. It’s already so funny

– Oh, it’s been a long time since I’ve watched a full-fledged pranking show like this. It’s nice The Idol Inc kids are so cute. I’ll watch it live!

└It’s obvious that you’re a fan~

└? What’s wrong with this guy?;;

└Ignore it, the guy’s crazy

It was natural since the entertainment show that they thought would fail showed a twist, and the idols from the hottest audition even made an appearance.

In addition, the video itself was funny.

Thanks to this, it also went viral outside of the entertainment community and SNS.

[The identity of the new variety show starring Testar? Full-scale pranking broadcast!]

[Variety show where they’re serious about tricking Testar]

[TVC’s new variety show, Testar’s hot content?]

The video, which was full of bird banners and keyword prank that were drawn by the development team, terribly attracted aggro and increased the number of views.

Besides, it wasn’t long before it got chosen.

– Is there anyone who’s here by searching for it?

It was the choice of the famous ‘WeTube algorithm’.

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CHAPTER 82

WeTube algorithm.

I didn’t know exactly what was the criteria, but it was a video algorithm that showed recommended videos.

And the preview video of <Man who only needs to say it once> starring Testar… For unknown reasons, it was chosen by the algorithm.

It first appeared as a recommendation related to overseas prank humor videos.

These people clicked excitedly, surprised by Korea’s professional surprise camera entertainment that appeared after a long time.

– Our country makes this again? It’s very good

– I hope a lot of famous guys come out and get frightened. It’s my fetish

└ Celebrity’s reactions are so much fun

– Please be successful I’m tired of healing variety shows

After that, it appeared under various TVC entertainment clips. Similar sensibilities had led to more influxes.

– Is this a new TVC variety show? Testar is so cute!!

– We need Testar’s talk show and healing trip… They have to come out and show off their friendship and drive me crazy Ah, TVC, why aren’t you quickly recruiting them~~

– It’s Idol Inc kids kyaa I was out of my mind then, but the memories keep coming back… I miss the spicy chicken flavor. I’m going to watch the show

Lastly… Strangely enough, there was an influx coming from animal videos.

This was because the bizarre birds on the banner that were caught in the thumbnail were classified as animals by AI.

There were many people who clicked in bewilderment at the unexpected otherworldly emotional thumbnail.

-? I came to criticize why such a monstrosity is recommended in the cute puppy videos, but it’s fun…

ㄴ

ㄴHeol, there’s someone who thought the same thing as me

– Is it because of that baby bird that it came up in connection with the bird’s eating video? It’s ridiculous, but it’s funny… It hurts my pride

– All the cast members were cast beforehand, right? I’m worried because they seem so surprised

Thanks to this, the preview of the second episode of<Man who only needs to say it once> began to soar endlessly

And in the process, the BGM that fit perfectly with the craziness of the video began to attract attention.

It was Testar’s ‘Magical Boy’ modulated vision.

– The background music sounds like a cat stomping its back paws in a distraught mood

└ Look at that metaphor

└That’s right, it’s exactly like this

– Does anyone know what the BGM is?

└Testar – Magical Boy~ It’s the latest song of the idol group that appeared here!

– Aha thank you~

– Heol idol song? Is their concept crazy?

└No, the original is a great song! (music video link)

└Oh, I saw it and it’s cool

└I can’t believe they changed the song like this

And again, people flowed into the ‘Magical Boy’ MV through the chain of related videos.

– Who came here after being chosen by the algorithm?

– I was definitely watching a video of a fountain installation for migratory birds, and when I came back to my sense, I was already watching the boy idol music video

– They’re so cute, but the music video is so cool! Press ‘like’ and go♡

– Heol, Idols are doing this kind of song these days. I didn’t know because I wasn’t interested in it after graduation… The song is nice

– Fans, are you having fun? I am curious

└Make sure to remember that these guys are debuting

┗It’s fun, but you’ll get pissed off, shed tears, and want to break the monitor. Recommended!

┗????

This series of processes had an unexpected butterfly effect.

It was an opportunity for the people who were not interested in idols or the latest songs to be interested in their songs.

In conclusion, it brought a slightly significant rise in the music charts.

[5th place: Magical Boy / Testar] ▲1

‘Magical Boy’ which had been stagnant in the 6th to 8th places, made a slight leap forward.

And a good song was bound to speed up its rise once it gained momentum.

This was because once exposed to the top five, the number of people who ‘try to listen’ even if they had prejudice increased significantly.

As a result.

[3rd place: Magical Boy / Testar] ▲2

The next day, Tuesday. ‘Magical Boy’ rose by two spots again.

For your information, a few days ago, VTIC gave up the top spot to a strong rapper after a long reign.

This thought began to occur among Testar’s fans, who were streaming like crazy.

‘Perhaps?’

‘No way?’

And as always, they impossibly hold onto it.

* * *

The third week of the music shows was coming to an end.

“Wooow!”

They couldn’t hear us because the microphone was off, but the members moved their mouths to left a greeting, waved their hands, and ran backstage.

Colorful lightsticks swayed below.

“I-It was fun…!”

“Today’s outfit was great and the shoes were comfortable, so it was really nice!”

When Kim Raebin shouted, shaking off his summer clothes and fancy jewelry, a friendly laugh broke out.

“Haha!”

“That’s right!”

They were going to laugh no matter what he said. The sweaty faces were smiling.

Cha Eugene chipped in.

“Winning first place is great!”

Yes. We finally won first place.

‘Of course, it’s not broadcasted.’

We won first place on Tnet’s music show ‘Music Night’ this week.

Am I upset? Honestly, I am. This was because a big singer would make a comeback this Friday and the chance to win first place with this activity was all gone.

Moreover… Um, first place on Music Night wasn’t very credible.

‘…Honestly, it’s favoritism.’

I checked and it was pushed by the broadcast score.

Anyway, the mood was good, there was no need to spoil it, so let’s just clap and nod.

We hadn’t been able to sleep, so there had to be a sense of accomplishment during our activity.

Even Lee Sejin added a word.

“…I wish it hadn’t been canceled.”

“S-Still we got the trophy!”

“Right, we’re going to receive a trophy for this activity!”

Ryu Chungwoo smiled and stretched.

I also felt relieved that we finished the week well.

And a little later.

“In the first week of July, the number one popular music is… Yes, congratulations! Testar’s Magical Boy!”

“…?”

We suddenly got another trophy.

“…??”

The stage fireworks exploded in front of the confused members.

Tap, tap! Pop!

No one was in a sound state of mind as the MC presented a bouquet and the trophy.

Me included.

‘What the hell is going on here?’

Moreover, the person who received the microphone was Kim Raebin.

“Uh… Thank you…”

Kim Raebin, who was out of his mind because he hadn’t prepared anything, looked around with eyes asking for help, and made eye contact with me.

“…”

‘Hey, I can’t either.’

Sorry, but I didn’t know what to say either. My head stopped for a moment as I was confused by the sudden escape from death.

Fortunately, the microphone usually went to the leader next… or so I thought.

“…Thank you. Unexpectedly, we won first place… First of all, thank you to the fans. And thank you to the staff who work together…”

Ryu Chungwoo calmly mentioned all the people that should be mentioned, and suddenly burst into tears. It felt like a sense of reality had returned.

‘I’m going crazy.’

Honestly, it was understandable that he’d cry. All this time, Ryu Chungwoo had been taking care of the kids… He did like half the manager’s job.

Fortunately, Keun Sejin received a microphone from Kim Raebin and diligently continued the speech.

“Director Kwak Shinkyun and Team Leader Kim Hyejung. Also, thank you so much to everyone who made this album together! And most of all… Fans, I love you so much! We really didn’t expect this… Thank you so much for giving us first place!”

“Aaaah!!”

“Congratulations!”

Fortunately, a strong reaction came back from under the stage. Thanks to VTIC not coming out this week after 3 weeks of domestic activities, live booing was avoided.

…Wait, that’s right.

‘How the hell did we beat VTIC?’

However, the score had already disappeared because of the prompter, and instead, it was right before the encore began.

“Yes~”

MCs slowly came out with microphones to leave ending remarks. It meant they were going to wrap this up.

At that moment, Cha Eugene, who grabbed the microphone before we knew it, blinked and shouted a word of appreciation.

“Shareholder-nim? Thank you!”

“Cough.”

It was a broadcast accident.

In front of the members who hurriedly suppressed Cha Eugene, the MCs steadfastly finished the ending remarks.

“Haha, when you want to listen to a popular song?”

“Live popular music!”

“Come to listen to it next week, too.”

And the prelude to ‘Magical Boy’ began to flow out.

After sending various glances to Cha Eugene who was full of question marks, the members let him go.

I barely started singing.

“…Tomorrow, I think of you who I met today and tomorrow…”

Maybe it was because of my mood, but the sound of the music box sounded exceptionally like in the preview video of the first variety show.

It was after checking the encore video that night that I realized that I even got the lyrics wrong.

There was no party crazier than this.

* * *

“Understand? If you are going to say something on a broadcast in the future, make sure to ask the hyungs first!”

“Yes…”

Cha Eugene was depressed after being nagged by the manager for 30 minutes. But at the same time, as he kept glancing at the trophy, it seemed his heart wasn’t in it.

‘Saying more would be useless.’

It seemed he was reflecting so I had to do something. I sighed and spoke.

“Hyung, I think we need to take a picture of this, too.”

“…Alright, go ahead.”

“Yes!”

Cha Eugene ran quickly and tried to lift the trophy like a baboon boasting a baby lion.

I stopped Cha Eugene.

“Hold the trophy and hang your head down.”

“Yes?”

“You should reflect.”

“Yes…”

Cha Eugene lowered the trophy with a sullen face.

The photo composition would come out well. I took a few pictures and sent them to Keun Sejin who was preparing to upload SNS.

“Write on the postscript that he’s reflecting on himself.”

“Okay~… Um, but it doesn’t seem necessary?”

“…?”

“Look at this.”

I checked the popular SNS posts on the smartphone screen that Keun Sejin held out.

[Is it true that Testar monumentally won first place on a music show but doesn’t have a stable fandom name yet? It must have looked like they were shaking a carrot[1]shake a carrot = a Korean meme. Something like (“If you’re in danger, shake/draw/show a carrot!”.]

“…”

“The atmosphere is fine.”

“Wait a minute.”

I took over the smartphone from Keun Sejin and started searching in detail.

And I found the answer in the number 1 most popular post in the community.

[Testar’s first place commotion (feat. the restraint of survival that can’t be escaped)]

When I clicked, the previous encore video was already uploaded with captions.

They added effects with all kinds of subtitles, so the figure of the members who were confused and out of their minds was expressed in a funny way.

…For your information, the cut of us avoiding helping Kim Raebin was combined with the ‘robot turning its eyes away meme’, and at the end, the wrong lyrics were cross-edited with the original stage and received countless ‘ ’ captions.

[Testar’s first 1st place award becomes a dark history.]

By the way, it was the title.

‘I’m going crazy.’

Anyway, right here, Cha Eugene’s courteous ‘shareholder remark’ was edited and uploaded like the highlight of the joke.

[Shareholder-nim? Thank you!]

[!!!!!]

The caption was ‘Idol Inc spirit is never too far’.

“…”

Below the video, among the laughing and congratulatory comments, there was some resentment from fans who wanted to beat up the Idol Inc spirit.

– My kids debuted and got 1st place, but why is the only name used to call the fans is shareholder

– Still, idols, fans, and everyone suffers from Idol Inc PTSD, are you not working in an agency

– I, too, want to hear the kids say ‘I love you ()’ <I want to hear the name of the fans here…

– The kids are going to have fun playing around with fan names, right…?

It didn’t end here.

Opinions recently uploaded to SNS or communities had begun to take a step further.

– Neither the light stick nor the fan color came out, right? Isn’t their operation has been a hit-and-miss? Honestly, it had been weird since they made a comeback within a month, but I didn’t say anything because I was afraid it would hinder the kids’ debut.

– There are no additional schedules for the kids’ variety shows, and instead of holding an event, they’d rather have a f*cking concert. With a boy group of this scale, you’ll make more money, but you don’t know that either

– Come to think of it, the members also came up with the concept of the first-place song. And Moondae did a PPT presentation. But isn’t it ugly that they started like this and produced it within a month? How much of the kids’ work did you change?

“…Um.”

All of a sudden, they were approaching the truth.

- 1. shake a carrot = a Korean meme. Something like (“If you’re in danger, shake/draw/show a carrot!”

Author's Thoughts

I have finally found out a way to make footnotes in a way that wouldn't distract from the story. Also, I forgot to say this but since a few chapters ago, I use Italic to indicate that the word is originally English.

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CHAPTER 83

The anger against the ‘agency that has yet to give away a single thing, including a fandom name, color, and official lightstick’ spread like an escalator.

‘I am not patient enough to suppress this.’

To be honest, it wouldn’t have been strange if it exploded earlier, but the song came out so well and was in the process of gaining momentum, so it seemed they didn’t discuss it publicly because they were afraid it would affect the performance.

Anyway, it seemed the company’s planning department had received a red light thanks to that.

Testar’s company-related schedule, originally scheduled for tonight, was canceled.

“Congratulations!”

Instead, there was a small first-place party in the dorm. It was on a small scale as we just ordered some chicken with the company card that they had allowed us to use.

The surprise element was the presence of alcohol.

“Since we’re celebrating first place, I think beer would be okay. Let’s drink moderately then clean it all up.”

“Yes!”

Ryu Chungwoo, who had received permission, spoke coolly and drank the beer at once. I wasn’t surprised because he looked like he was strong at drinking.

Of course, the two minors were given soda.

It felt like they were being alienated somehow, but Seon Ahyeon talked to the two of them, which was rare.

“L-Let’s drink together next year!”

Cha Eugene answered with a paper cup in his mouth. It seemed he was distracted by the carbonated drinks he hadn’t seen for a while.

“I can’t drink…”

“…U-Uh?”

“He’s a Korean-American, so he’s allowed to drink from the age of 21.”

Keun Sejin who was opening a beer interjected with a grin.

“Hahaha, it doesn’t matter. You’re going to drink it in Korea anyway!”

“…!”

Both Kim Raebin and Cha Eugene looked very enlightened.

‘You guys are having fun.’

I held a beer in one hand and operated my smartphone in the other. It was to confirm the situation.

‘How the hell did we win first place?’

It was an impossible situation when I checked a few days ago.

I hadn’t looked into it since then because this week’s ranking period was over.

“…”

And after a while. I realized the situation.

‘There are three factors overlapping.’

Here, the influx of music videos and music songs became a small catalyst, and the chart rankings gradually rose.

The second was… The fan signing event.

Album sales were still quite high due to the application for the additional fan signing event.

‘…The copies have gone up.’

Seeing that it had reached 180 copies for the fan signing, I broke out in a cold sweat.

Let’s think about this later. I had no idea what to do to now make it a fair price…

…Anyway, with these two factors interlocking and creating synergy, fans seemed to have noticed the situation first and drove the vote. VTIC’s music activities had ended, so there was a slight decrease in their voting.

In addition, a decisive third factor had entered here. ‘Popular Music’ on Sunday had recently reorganized its ranking system.

In the process, the ranking date, which was originally on Monday, was pushed back until Wednesday, reflecting all of the rising music scores.

In terms of album sales, all of Testar’s special fan signing events were reflected, and the gap with VTIC’s score widened only because the counting period was pushed back.

‘It’s luck.’

That’s why we beat VTIC by a narrow margin.

To a certain extent, the score was only seven points apart.

“…”

I unknowingly gulped down my beer. I couldn’t believe we had accomplished it like this.

Of course, I had suffered terribly. So I was very excited that this had happened, maybe it even triggered my need to have compensation.

Besides, a small experiment was also successful.

“…Are you going to drink more?”

“Yes.”

I took another can of beer from Lee Sejin and called out the status window.

“Kyahahahaha!!”

The surroundings were filled with laughter.

It seemed they were playing the captioned encore video on the TV screen.

In contrast to the guys who were embarrassed, laughing, and enjoying themselves, a cold and neat status window pop-up caught my eye.

[Successfully won first place!]

You won first place on the music show <Popular Music>!

!Time limit: Fulfilled (great success)

!Status abnormality: 'Win first place or die' removed!

: Check the truth ☜Click!

'Check the truth' was given as a reward for the removal of the status abnormality.

If I didn't take it, the status abnormality was not removed.

In other words, if I didn't take the reward, the content of the pop-up wouldn't be applied.

'I was agonizing over this.'

The earlier I removed the state abnormality, the period for the new status abnormality to appear was getting shorter.

Then, the sudden death crisis remained the same, and only the difficulty level rose like crazy.

So it was better to wait as long as possible within the time limit.

Considering the last case, I thought about the way to do it from time to time, but I was just glad that the simplest guess worked.

'I feel much more at ease.'

The biggest reason was that I could look at the situation for the next 300 days without being chased.

Next, about this status window… The speculation that it was a system, not an intelligent with fluid malice, was strengthened.

‘If it had any malicious intent, it would have threatened me to take the reward through a pop-up or made me take it by force.’

Considering that it didn’t happen, there was a high probability that there would be an end to the status abnormality. Games usually had an ending.

‘Well, it’s just wishful thinking.’

It seemed that once I solved a problem and got drunk, I was able to interpret the situation positively.

Anyway, now that the pop-up had been put on hold, I could take my time checking the status window and the situation. I gulped down the beer in my hand again.

“M-Moondae.”

“Yeah.”

“Y-You’re drinking too fast… I-I don’t think it’s good for you…”

“Ah, you’re right.”

Was it too much to empty one can at a time? I clicked my tongue, cleaned up the beer, and then grabbed the chicken.

“Y-You like chicken, I heard it.”

“You did? Ah, that fan signing event.”

“H-Hn!”

Seon Ahyeon smiled and nodded.

“E-Eat a lot!”

“I will.”

“Eat a lot… A lot!”

“…”

‘I think he’s a bit drunk.’

He hadn’t even finished a single can, but seeing that he was drunk, it seemed he didn’t know how much he could drink. Had he never tried drinking before?

I gave Seon Ahyeon a soda. Then, I ate the chicken while remembering the homma I met at the first fan signing event.

‘She’s good at color correction.’

She posted a lot of things during <Idol Inc> so I felt indebted to her.

The next time I saw her, I should allocate more time to her camera.

“Oooh!”

“Hey, what should we do? We look really stupid. Hiccup.”

The other guys played a clip of <Man who only needs to say it once>’s main broadcast on the TV screen following the encore video.

[Heee!]

Just in time, Cha Eugene, who was screaming at the bird’s head split open, was being zoomed in.

“Uahahaha!!”

Even I burst into laughter so hard that I teared up.

‘It’s really funny.’

It is so well-edited that there was no harassment controversy. In addition, the last beef scene was well done, so it was heartwarming.

[You must have been surprised, so eat a lot]

[Today’s Testar]

[They eat 5kg of Korean beef… ☆]

[It was worth spending all the staff’s production cost]

The members were astonished.

“Oh my gosh.”

“5, 5kg…”

“No wonder I gained some weight the next day…”

“It’s all right. It’s all gone because of the schedule.”

“That’s right.”

In the midst of this, the guys who were worried murmured these words.

“Still, I didn’t know I ate up to 5kg.”

“That amount would have been quite huge.”

“…It’ll be fine.”

They made it sound as if they were losing money, but there was no such thing as a show that lost money.

I took the remote control from Keun Sejin and went to a related video.

[Testar’s Korean Beef 5kg Mukbang Unedited <Man who only needs to say it once> ep.2]

“We must have already paid for all the meat there.”

“…!”

The view count already exceeded a million. The members nodded in admiration.

“How about doing a mukbang show? I think I can try everything I’ve always wanted to eat.”

“Let’s send Moondae to the center!”

“C-Center!”

Who gave Seon Ahyeon another beer?

Fortunately, this topic passed quickly.

“I want to keep watching!”

“Ah, that’s right! Let’s play it again from the time we rushed into Moondae!”

Because the excited guys giggled and replayed the video.

‘Now that I look at it, I think everyone is a bit drunk.’

Even the two minors got drunk in the atmosphere.

Well… They looked happy, so let’s leave it alone.

We were at the dorm anyway, so it didn’t get matter if they got drunk.

I decided to proceed with the monitoring I had been pushing back with my smartphone.

– Thank you for feeding our kids so much Korean beef… Thank you so much…!

– Cha Eugene watches horror movies well, but it’s so cute that he’s weak against it in real life Coo Are you scared of staff bird?

– It’s as funny as the preview video It’s a successful sale to Muggles who haven’t seen Idol Inc

– Regarding the fact that Ahyeon’s picture taken by Moondae is better than mine… Yosol 1 loss, Moondae 1 win (revised photo)

“…”

The last one… Looking at the profile, this was the account where the person who took pictures of Seon Ahyeon posted small talk.

And I remembered taking the photo of Seon Ahyeon which was attached to the post a few days ago. I didn’t expect to find it on the Internet.

Just as the meat mukbang ended, related content came out on the TV screen.

[Boom!]

[※Post-credit scene※]

First, a short cut of Testar taking pictures here and there with a camera passed by.

[The result of this action]

Messy photos came pouring out, including a photo of a bird that looked like a strange creature because it was all shaken, feets running and stumbling to the ground, and a picture of the sky and the shore that wasn’t horizontal.

And a caption came up.

[It’s unrecognizable…]

“Ahahaha!”

“It was my first time trying it!”

“What a waste of film.”

As the parties added a word at a time, a new caption appeared on the screen.

[With exception]

A black bird leaping off the surface of the water, a blue bird swinging on a tree branch, and several scenes of the reservoir passed by.

These were neat cuts that contrasted with the previous photos.

And the last thing that came up was Seon Ahyeon smiling brightly under the sun.

This was the original of the revised photo that Seon Ahyeon’s homma posted earlier.

“Huh?”

“…It must be Park Moondae’s.”

Just as Lee Sejin said so, a caption immediately appeared.

[It’s all from the same camera.]

[↓The person who took the pictures]

The video of Park Moondae taking a picture of Seon Ahyeon was crossed out.

And the voice of a self-mosaicked staff was inserted with the caption ‘Camera Director’.

[How did he get such a good shot…?]

[This fellow is really good at taking pictures? (Flustered)]

The images of the staff looking into the camera with exclamations of ‘Oh~’ passed by on the screen.

[Park Moondae: Mysterious golden hands (According to the camera director)]

[※Confirmed by <Man who only needs to say it once>]

The caption had a stamped-on effect. And the video was over.

“…”

I didn’t know that this could be used as content.

And from next to me, Keun Sejin deliberately started pretending to be heartbroken.

“Sigh… This is really saddening. Moondae is discriminating against friends. Could it be that you only care about Ahyeon? If you have a friend besides Ahyeon who treats you so well, isn’t it right to prove your friendship with them by taking their photos and uploading them often?”

“…”

“The more Moondae stays still, the more heartbroken I am, the more I talk. Moondae, you don’t like giving up quickly and making a promise to upload pictures…”

“I’ll take a picture and upload it tomorrow, so stop it.”

“Alringht.”

Drunken men didn’t know how to give up. He might talk to me again, so let’s pretend to look at my smartphone.

On the screen, Seon Ahyeon’s revised photo that was posted earlier was still there.

‘Anyway, it came out well as expected.’

To be honest, if this picture was sold, it worth higher than the market price.

I forgot to return the camera, so I couldn’t check it properly, but I didn’t expect to see it like this.

‘Well, it’s nice to be recognized.’

There was nothing wrong with taking good pictures. I continued to check SNS with a relaxed mind.

And I saw a popular post by a fan of Park Moondae.

– I thought the pictures posted on SNS were unusual, but he’s really good at taking pictures, so why is his selfie skill so bad…

“…”

I haven’t taken a lot of pictures…?

Come to think of it, when I took pictures of others, only good pictures came out. I needed to research how to take a good picture of me.

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CHAPTER 84

“Hmm…”

Before I knew it, the dorm’s living room became quiet.

We won first place, but since the alcohol was added, we became relaxed and most of the accumulated fatigue poured out, so now most of them were sleeping and stretched out.

The two minors also fell asleep. Lee Sejin had already entered the room in the midst of this, perhaps due to physical problems.

He was probably asleep, too.

So what was left of the living room…

“Moondae, are you okay?”

It was just me and Ryu Chungwoo.

Because the guy over there was a strong drinker, and I was still sober thanks to the characteristic ‘Bacchus 500’.

“Yes, I am fine.”

“Then I’m glad.”

Ryu Chungwoo smiled and drank the beer in his hand.

‘How many cans did he drink?’

It didn’t matter since he was hardly drunk anyway, but he must have drunk more than half a dozen cans.

It was clear that his drinking capacity was enormous.

“Um, how’s the activity?”

“Well, it’s worthwhile.”

“Haha, Moondae is always calm.”

Ryu Chungwoo put aside the can of beer that he had finished drinking. His face looked sad.

‘Why are you being like this again?’

We made it to first place, but his face didn’t look good as if there was something else he was worried about.

“I wish I had a calm personality like you.”

“…I think hyung is calm enough, though?”

Considering the attitude this guy took for the past two months after <Idol Inc>, it was an unexpected remark. However, Ryu Chungwoo shook his head.

“No, I think I have poor judgment at a critical moment. Like the fact that I couldn’t say how I felt when we won first place today… In general, that’s how it is.”

“…?”

This was even more random.

‘My thoughts on winning first place are already a mess, but what’s this.’

“Hyung, you’ve been a good leader since the audition. I don’t think you had such a problem.”

“I was a leader because I was the older one, not because I was good at it. I had never run a team properly… Yes, except for the second round that we did together.”

Honestly, it wasn’t Ryu Chungwoo’s fault.

‘You just didn’t have much luck with your team.’

I grudgingly opened another beer.

“During <Idol Inc.>, it was a short-term survival game, so there were very few teams that worked properly. Besides, I think Testar is doing well.”

“…We’re doing well but I am worried I will get us into trouble.”

Ryu Chungwoo smiled bitterly.

“Honestly, the only way I can contribute to this team is tby taking the leader’s position, so I assigned myself to it… I kind of hit my limit. I’m not the type to put up with anything like this…”

“Hmm.”

No wonder Ryu Chungwoo’s attitude had become more conservative and sensible since the formation of Testar, it seemed he had been holding it in.

‘Now that I think about it, in the second round, he originally had a more challenging and cheerful personality.’

The conflicts that he had experienced during Idol Inc must have had a strange learning effect.

Ryu Chungwoo continued to speak. He seemed quite upset.

“I thought about it during Idol Inc. I wondered if coming here was the right choice…”

“…”

Come to think of it, there was no reason to quit archery and appear in a failed audition program after winning the gold medal.

“How did you turn up there?”

“Oh, I don’t think anyone knows this. I have a relative among Idol Inc’s writers.”

“…!”

Wait.

“Is it Ryu Seorin?”

“That’s right. Did you know right away because we have the same last name?”

Ryu Chungwoo laughed, but I couldn’t laugh.

“Because noona kept asking me… I was starting a new career path anyway, so I showed up.”

I broke out in a cold sweat.

‘If this is found out now, wouldn’t it be a scandal…?’

It wouldn’t matter if the audition had failed, but now <Idol Inc.> season 3 had established itself as a wildly popular program.

One of the members who debuted was a relative of the writer?

‘Ryu Chungwoo only received friendly edits too.’

…It was a perfect scandal.

Perhaps noticing this, Ryu Chungwoo also added with a smile.

“It won’t harm you guys. She was a distant relative anyway, and I barely knew her. One day, I suddenly got a call… It was like a casting.”

It probably meant that in terms of format, his was no different from what Park Moondae had received.

However, when the article appeared, there was no way that it would be written kindly.

Titles like ‘A Testar member is actually a relative of the Idol Inc’s writer’, ‘A relative who was invited to debut… Idol Inc’s shadow’ would come out.

I barely managed to open my mouth.

“…Don’t tell anyone.”

“Um, don’t worry about that either. It’s the first time I’m talking about it.”

Apparently, as soon as the first episode aired and she saw the reaction, Writer Ryu Seorin called and asked for confirmation.

‘…We just need to get past this period.’

By the time the next season of <Idol Inc> came out, then… If it exploded in two or three years, it would go away without a hitch.

And if it hadn’t exploded throughout the broadcast and hadn’t exploded yet now, that meant nobody knew it yet.

I checked with Ryu Chungwoo once again just in case.

“How distant are you related to that writer?”

“Um… except that we are both from the Pungsan Ryu clan… I didn’t even know her. That’s about it.”

“…”

In that case, it was possible to make an excuse by saying that she wasn’t even a relative. They could just say that it was easy to cast him because they were from the same birth family.

I relaxed a little.

I didn’t know what the next status abnormality would be, but it seemed I would struggle even more since it certainly wouldn’t be good if bad news came to the team.

And I thought about other things.

‘Come to think of it, I am also from the Pungsan Ryu clan.’

I couldn’t be sure since my parents were dead and I didn’t care much about it, but perhaps I was.

In that case, Ryu Chungwoo’s generation name[1]a syllable in the given name that is typically shared by siblings was similar. Ryu Gunwoo, Ryu Chungwoo.

Hmm.

‘It’s driving me crazy.’

Well, it didn’t matter. I shrugged my shoulders.

“Strangely enough, I ended up telling you… I don’t usually talk about things like this to my dongsaengs. Haha.”

“…”

Do you instinctively sense that I am older?

I changed the subject.

“Then… You joined the broadcast, so it means you were already preparing to be a singer.”

“Hn, I can’t continue archery.”

Ryu Chungwoo pretended to turn his shoulder slightly.

“I had a serious car accident when I was young… I didn’t know that something was wrong, and it wasn’t until I grew up that I suffered the side effects, my hands shake when I put in strength.”

“…”

“So I quit two years ago… What I’m good at, I’ve been exploring it in my new career path. Haha.”

It was the relaxed attitude of someone who had already overcome it.

‘That means it’s over.’

I just nodded, too.

Then, I heard someone moving next to my feet.

“…Sniff.”

“…??”

“I’m sorry, I heard…”

Cha Eugene, who had been sleeping on his stomach next to me, woke up with tears running down his face. And Kim Raebin, who was lying behind him, also sniffled and moved his body.

“I happened to come to my senses… I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to eavesdrop…”

“I didn’t mean to, sniff.”

“…”

The two guys who hadn’t drunk alcohol seemed to have quickly come to their senses at the noise.

Ryu Chungwoo looked embarrassed for a moment but soon laughed it off.

“It’s my fault for talking in the middle of the living room. Don’t worry about it and go to sleep.”

But the two guys hesitated and threw in more words.

“Hyung, I’ll do better…”

“Chungwoo hyung is cool. You’re doing great as an idol!”

“…Um.”

Ryu Chungwoo nodded with a complicated look. I chipped in.

“I think I can listen to you better now, but wouldn’t be nice to take it easy from now on? Leader.”

“…Don’t you want to do it?”

“Yes? Of course, I’ll give up halfway and fail.”

“…”

Me, the leader? I certainly would get mad and cut off one or two relationships.

Perhaps sensing my sincerity, Ryu Chungwoo turned speechless. His face looked ridiculous.

“…Phew.”

But he soon answered with a more relaxed attitude.

“…Right, I understand. I’ll continue as the leader.”

“Wow!”

“Instead, you guys stop me if I try to do something useless. Now I can’t just put on a brake.”

“Of course.”

Ryu Chungwoo muttered something like ‘Seriously’, then stretched out and went into his room. Perhaps because he had spoken his mind, his steps seemed lighter.

And in the living room… Only food waste and fallen men remained.

“…”

“…Shall we go in?”

“Yes.”

When they woke up, they would go in on their own. Let them be.

* * *

Shortly after Testar untangled the feelings and joy of winning first place.

Fans held back until the news of Testar winning first place for the first time hit the headline and became a real-time search term. Because they didn’t want to teamkill Testar’s good news.

– For now, let’s continue making inquiries

– If you know what’s going on, prepare yourself. Fans can contact each other via phone and email and quietly continue to request feedback.

However, in the end, they didn’t receive any feedback even after a few days had passed.

– Are these bastards out of their minds?

Public opinion, which had been bubbling under the surface, eventually exploded, and fans eventually issued a statement to the agency.

[Statement requesting support for artists’ activity]

[July 10, 202X, Testar’s fan association criticizes T1 Stars Entertainment’s irrational management and demands that the legitimate rights of artists and consumers (fans) be respected. Before debut…]

Because it wasn’t tied to any individual member, the scale grew like crazy as all members’ individual fan communities united.

Fortunately, to the fans who were preparing for fax and post-it protests as a next measure if they didn’t receive a statement, the agency gave a respond.

[Hello. This is T1 Stars Entertainment.]

[We are doing our best to support Testar’s activities, and the recent concerns of the fans will also be implemented in time…]

It was a declaration of surrender.

There were some fans who were annoyed by the slight nuance that ‘We were already preparing and you guys overreacted!’ but for now the atmosphere subsided when they said they would do something soon.

– As expected, do these losers even listen to words…

– Honestly, you’re saying that the fandom name would have come out with the 2nd album if we didn’t make a fuss, right? Actually, I think so too

– A lightstick is still a lightstick, but from now on, please don’t set up the kids’ comeback schedule like that. No matter how much you like the money, stop squeezing the kids.

– Just know that I’ll send you a protest truck next time there’s another crazy article about a comeback within a month

Afterward, the agency secretly tried to raise their luck with articles such as ‘Fandom name chosen by fans themselves’ as if they were going to do it Idol Inc-style, but it was sunk in by the fans’ attack,

– Please! Stop! Making us! Do that! We’re tired of voting stocks now, so just let Testar do it

– Enough with the Idol Inc spirit…

– Why do you keep trying to get the fans to do it for the genius idols who can easily create a concept for the number 1 song? We’re just going to laugh and talk with the kids

– Yeah, we’re just going to spend money. Hurry up and take a picture of the goods

Fortunately, the agency didn’t look further and prepared the schedule diligently.

So that Friday.

[The national stock is here!]

[Testar’s first W Live]

[Testar talks about giving a name to the fans!]

[7/15 (SUN) 3 : 00 PM]

A jaw-dropping event banner popped up.

– Wow, finally

– Our kids are doing dub live now, too!

– Holding out wins!

– Keun Sejin is speaking in crazy live aaaaa

– Please, even if it turns out boring, I will still love it, so let’s go live for a long time

– Still, for a large company, T-One guys don’t know how to work

Fans who had only barely seen Testar move in real-time on music shows were very excited.

Testar’s W app channel, which had yet to post a preview video, had already started to have an increased number of subscribers.

And at 3:00 pm on the day of the event.

[Aah!]

[Hello~]

Testar turned on W Live.

- 1. a syllable in the given name that is typically shared by siblings

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CHAPTER 85

[Have we logged in?]

[I think the alarm has just set in.]

Although the transmission was only delayed, Testar’s members, who had no experience in this kind of live broadcasting, whispered while looking at the screen.

Then Cha Eugene shouted with a bright face.

[Oh, there’s a number!]

[Ah!]

[Hello~]

Looking at the real-time comments that popped up in an instant, Testar’s members smiled and lowered their heads, and then they waved their hands.

“Hello… Hello!”

A college student waved her hand unconsciously when she saw Park Moondae bowing on the screen.

The puppy lying on the bed stared at her with a look as if it had seen all sorts of weird things, but it wasn’t the time to care about that.

‘I couldn’t even go to the fan signing, so I have to watch the W live!’

She was planning to go to graduate school after graduating in the fall and couldn’t make time at the end of June, unlike her friend who was a homma. Thanks to that, she had to let go of the fan signing event with eyes full of tears.

‘I was thinking of breaking my saving account… ’

It hurt her heart even though her friend had consoled her through a text message as she cried about how she had money but couldn’t use it. What Moondae did at the fansign… It was because she had heard too much detail…

‘When he dyes his hair blonde… I’ll meet him then.’

She concentrated on the screen, muttering that when she saw him in real life for the first time, she wanted him to have blonde hair. It was a sad self-justification…

[The reason we’re doing this W live today… It’s because we’re finally announcing the official name of our fans.]

[Woow!]

Testar applauded and responded enthusiastically to Ryu Chungwoo’s words.

Moondae was also clapping, the cloth fluttered because he moved without rolling up the big-sized sleeves.

“So cute…!”

The dog raised its ears, thinking she was talking to it, but it quickly realized that she wasn’t and it looked away from the college student with sullen eyes.

On the screen, comments were going up fast.

– I love you!

– Congratulations on winning first place

– *MARRY ME PLEASE*

– ♡♡♡♡

– It’s my birthday today, please call my name

– Let’s make Testar’s next album a hit!

Since it was just the beginning, there were many comments like these that just poured out.

Testar seemed to want to read something, but they couldn’t read it well because it was too fast, so they just smiled instead. Because they had confirmed that there were a lot of hearts.

[It’s good to see you~ Everyone!]

[I missed you a lot~ What are you all doing? It’s 3 pm on the weekend, so it’s the right time to eat a snack~]

[I want to eat snacks!]

As soon as Cha Eugene finished speaking, the staff behind the smartphone camera sent a signal saying, ‘I will bring it to you, so please proceed with the opening as scripted.’

It seemed they were worried that the rookie who was doing W live for the first time would go off-topic during the opening.

At the sight of Cha Eugene looking like he was about to shake a carrot at any moment, the members naturally pacified him and pulled him back.

(TL note: Shake a carrot is a meme in Korea. “If you’re in danger, shake/draw/show a carrot!”, it’s something like that.)

[Haha, shall we check what we prepared first?]

[Yes!]

As Testar moved away from the camera, a desk was seen set up in the back. The desk covered with white cloth looked uneven, and anyone could see that there was something in it.

– What’s with the desk?

– Is that an album?

– I’m cheering you on from Indonesia

– All of the oppas are so cute!

– You all look ugly

– Eugene, are you hungry?

All kinds of questions, personal questions, and even hate comments filled the comment section but fortunately, Testar was unable to see the comments due to the distance from the screen.

Because anyone could come in, real-time comments were a mess.

The college student gritted her teeth.

‘I have to report all the haters…!’

She was barely able to check it because it went up in an instant.

She hoped that Moondae was at a distance where he couldn’t check the comments, and she focused again on Testar on the screen.

[What we’re going to introduce today is… Tada! It’s the lightsticks that we drew!]

[Wow!]

When the first white cloth was removed from the desk, panels with each member’s name were piled up.

The members clapped excitedly and each took the panel with their names on it.

[Each of us made one, and today, with you guys as witnesses, we are going to discuss and select one of them!]

[I worked really hard on it!]

[We haven’t checked our drawings yet.]

[Revealed for the first time!]

“…”

She shut her mouth tight.

Moondae holding his panel with both hands was cute. But her stomach was burning.

‘The guys in the agency really don’t understand…!’

It was absurd that they made Testar kids vote for themselves when they told the fans not to vote.

‘When the kids say they want this and that, you put them together and pick out the design…!’

It was the first time she liked an idol and her head became dizzy from the frustrating situation.

Did they make members do this when working on the title tracks and that was how the concept production presentation came out in the second episode of the reality show? Did Testar personally take on the challenge?

A strong doubt flashed through her mind.

However, since her top priority was Park Moondae who moved in real-time right in front of her eyes, the college student’s attention was on him again.

[Now, shall we reveal and explain the pictures one by one?]

[Good idea!]

[Then, starting from the right~]

Ryu Chungwoo, who was sitting on the far right, looked slightly embarrassed, but he took off the tape and revealed his drawing.

And what was in it… It was a picture of a ball made of mysterious lines.

[…?]

[…?!]

[Hyung, this… It’s a lightstick, right?]

[Pfft.]

Several people grasped the situation and buried their heads in their knees. It was to prevent themselves from bursting into laughter.

Ryu Chungwoo also ended up laughing.

[HaHa, I’m not good at drawing. Um, this round lightstick… I thought it would be nice if it has a hole in the shape of fingers to make it easier to hold and shake over your head.]

[Ooh.]

[Round like a baseball instead of a stick!]

[It’s pretty when it’s round and shiny.]

The drawing wasn’t great, but everyone held back their laughter and nodded, saying that the presentation was good.

Afterward, Testar pointed out only good things from each member and proceeded with the conversation by giving out compliments.

Because it wasn’t an event where their opinions had to be reflected, even if they went about it in a roundabout way, it was fine as long as they picked a pretty one.

[Ahyeon’s drawing looks like a magic wand, it’s so pretty.]

[T-Thank you.]

[We are… Magical Boys… So we use a magic wand as a lightstick…? That’s convincing!]

[It’s possible!]

Of course, the overly unrealistic argument was naturally ignored.

[Since the purpose of the lightstick is to make it fun for the fans to enjoy the stage, what if it makes a sound like maracas when you shake it?]

[That’s a fun idea.]

[But Raebin-ssi, wouldn’t that make our voices difficult to hear?]

[Ugh.]

Kim Raebin was defeated three minutes after his presentation began.

–

– Raebin, it’s okay

– So cute

– Any lightstick is fine ♡

– *so cute*

Although comments such as ‘*eng plz*‘ and ‘screw you’ appeared from time to time, most of the fans were watching the screen with warm smiles.

It was the same with the college student. Before she knew it, she was smiling at the screen while hugging the puppy.

‘Now it’s Moondae’s turn!’

[Now… Moondae-ssi… Oh?]

Park Moondae on the screen silently took off the tape and turned the picture to the camera.

It was a drawing of two majestic black lightsticks.

It was fine until there. There were quite a few lightsticks in that style.

The problem was that there were traces of attempts to draw various things around it.

All of them were terribly poorly drawn, so they looked like some sort of weird amoeba.

[…??]

Then Park Moondae opened his mouth with a face that looked like he'd given up everything.

[…It just happened.]

In an instant, waves of laughter ate up the audio.

[Puhahaha!!]

[Moondae's drawing has the most impact!]

[You… You're worse than Chungwoo hyung!]

The members, who forgot the concept of using honorifics, looked into the picture and laughed like crazy. Even Seon Ahyeon was holding back his laughter with his face turning red.

And the college student burst into laughter.

It was half funny and half dorky.

'I guess Moondae is really bad at drawing…!'

But the traces of him working hard to draw it were so cute that her heart was about to explode!

[Ah, sorry for laughing!]

[Right, we should listen to Moondae-ssi’s explanation!]

[…Well, it’s fine.]

Moondae on the screen cleared his throat a few times, then started to explain it piece by piece, pointing at the drawing with his hand.

[First of all… It looks like a baseball bat.]

[Mmmm.]

[It would be nice if a magic wand comes out from the inside when you turn the handle and take it out.]

[-!!]

[That’s new?]

[It’s nice?]

Everyone started to get excited, saying that they remembered the magic sword toy they used when they were young.

[Then, how about using Ahyeon’s design for our magic wand?]

[Put Chungwoo hyung’s circle in the middle!]

[Please separate the bat with one touch!]

The production cost was rising like crazy, but no one cared.

As a result, something like a mega ultra magic toy was being made.

– Guys!

– Enough… That’s enough

– Oh my gosh

– What the heck is that

– Can we just change into that and cheer for them?

– As long as you guys like it!

Testar received a pen from outside the camera and each of them added various elements, drawing a new lightstick.

As a result, it naturally began to be compared to Park Moondae's drawing, which was in the middle of being introduced.

[Wait, then was this a magic wand, Moondae-ssi?]

[…Yes.]

Keun Sejin laughed again when he saw the shape similar to a twisted pretzel.

Park Moondae eventually covered his face with one hand and pushed the picture to the end of the table.

"Gasp…"

He looked so miserable and cute that the prospective graduate student eventually began to post real-time comments. Perhaps she wasn't the only one who thought so, the comments were lagging due to the heavy traffic.

– Moondae is so cute

– Let's get married

- Keunse comfort Moondae

– Is this what love is

– (heart emoticon)

– It looks like a worm

– Do anything else except drawing

– I love you!

It even passed through foreign languages.

A flood of comments poured down to the point that it was impossible to know what was what.

Meanwhile, the new lightstick design, which was completed after many twists and turns, was displayed on the screen.

[Tada!]

[The drawing of the lightstick concept, it’s decided!]

[Wow!!]

The production team would be overwhelmed by the unit price as soon as they received it, but it seemed plausible.

It was thanks to their sensible opinions.

By the way, Park Moondae took his painting back with a series of ‘It’s okay’ from the members.

Still, he must be happy that the lightstick design was completed, there was a small smile on Moondae’s face as he clapped his hands.

‘…I like black hair, too.’

Whether it was black or blonde, the college student eventually admitted that she had to see the real thing…

The members on the screen put down their paintings and organized them, and then they rushed to the front side of the desk which was still covered with a white cloth.

[Now, there's only the long-awaited announcement left.]

[Announcement of the fandom name!]

Saying that this was also decided after discussing it together, the members who were amused stretched out their hands toward the cloth together with slightly nervous faces.

[Dadumdadum!]

[Revealed!]

Then they all picked up the cloth and threw it behind them.

"…??"

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CHAPTER 86

[Tada!]

What was hidden under the cloth… was a heavy nameplate.

– ???

– ? What's this

The luxurious and huge pearly nameplate, which could only be found on the desk of a corporate chairman, was written in Gungseo style.

[Loviewer]

[*Loviewer*]

Ryu Chungwoo opened his mouth with a smile.

[We chose this song by thinking of the fans who watch us with love.]

[*LOVE plus Reviewer*! Like that~]

Cha Eugene attached an additional explanation. He looked at the giant nameplate with proud eyes.

[You want to have it? It was made for you!]

[It means that our fans who have invested in us are the best… Ah, and after this W live, we'll send it to fans by lottery!]

It was only natural, but the nameplate that popped out of nowhere was so random that it was just funny.

By the way, Park Moondae had opposed it until the end, but he gave up because he was pushed back by the majority vote.

Anyway, Testar seemed so proud, so the fans just pushed down the comments with smiley and heart emoticons. Because they were cute.

Of course, the fierce situation was relayed back and forth to SNS.

– You're telling us on W app to take the old-fashioned nameplate and get rid of it, right? But it's the first W live, so we'll let it slide We'll let it slide only this once!

– Ah Good joke~

– I don't see any sh*t coming out, read the mood

– First of all, the name is fine, so the nameplate is unexpectedly cute ?

Thanks to this, the members who were curious about the reaction to the fandom name and went closer to their smartphone screens were able to judge the situation based on texts such as ' ', ' ' and 'I love you'.

[Report! The response seems good!]

[I-I am glad…]

[Great!]

Testar excitedly continued the next presentation.

[Then, we will announce the official color next!]

* * *

Testar’s first W live lasted quite a long time.

It was originally scheduled for two hours, but the members were unwilling to end the first W live only following the script.

So in the second half, quite a lot of TMI came out.

[Summary of the MBTI that Testar released on the W app today]

: Ryu Chungwoo ESFJ / Lee Sejin A ISFP / Seon Ahyeon ISFJ / Keun Sejin ENTJ / Park Moondae INTJ / Kim Raebin INFP / Cha Eugene ENTP

It was a delicacy to see the kids who hadn’t done anything like this do this live and have fun… Testar is where you should go even in W live…

※It wasn’t an official test, so just watch it for fun!

– None of the kids’ personality overlap

– The kids are so cute today. I hope they turn on the W app often

– Extrovert, introvert, it all came out accurately. Keun Sejin’s E is especially convincing

– When Chungwoo’s ESFJ was explained, the kids were amazed that it was so accurate, but they were like kindergarten kids who adored their teacher Aigoo, cute ones

– The ones who seem to have low empathy are T. It suits them.

ㄴ?? There’s a fool who judges other people based on their MBTI?

ㄴ In that case half of humanity should be tied up and smacked

Of course, they were mostly currently celebrating the fandom name that was finally decided on.

-Testar, honestly I felt uncomfortable because I immediately thought of tester, but thanks to my singer who set the concept of a loving viewer to the fans, I forget everything

└That’s right. Testar-Loviewer, a fated pair. I don’t accept objection

– As soon as the court opens tomorrow, my name will be changed to Kim Loviewer , it’s lovely and doesn’t sound nerdy

└ Are you crazy l It’s weird if two people apply in one day, I am the only one who’s going to do it

└

– It’s nice to make the fandom color three-tone based on the sky-blue for each time zone. It’s related to the worldview of this album

└That’s right. It’s a recent color, so it doesn’t feel superficial

– Actually, I think our lightstick will stand out a lot… The color is good regardless…

└ That’s right

└I’m already looking forward to the public broadcast

Testar’s fans spent Sunday enjoying the various hot contents that exploded at the first W Live.

In addition, the last fan signing event for this activity was in progress.

– Will the fan signing be okay right after W live

– They’re really bad at scheduling;

While worrying about Testar and cursing the agency, the human heart had no choice but to wait for the reviews after hearing that they would ask questions related to W live.

Fortunately, the atmosphere delivered in real-time was very good.

– Someone gave Raebin maracas in the shape of a baseball bat Raebin was about to die from embarrassment (photo)

– I asked Moondae to draw a puppy. Um… Anyway, Moon Puppy said it’s a puppy, so this is a puppy from now on. (A drawing that looked like a burst-out hotteok[1]hotteok = Korean sweet pancake)

– Today, it’s Ahyeon who prepared the gift A deer pen. I got an autograph with this! (photo)

And Testar was also holding the fan signing event more energetically thanks to the feeling that the work was ending successfully.

* * *

“Moondae, can you draw a lightstick here?”

“…Sure. Here?”

“Yes!”

I felt like I got similar requests about 10 times just today alone. I drew the final version of the lightstick next to the autograph, hiding my bitterness.

…I was the one drawing it, but I couldn’t tell what it was.

“Gasp! I love it so much…”

Do you like it because my sloppy appearance looks humane…

‘Or is it because it’s rare that I am bad at drawing?’

It didn’t matter either way as long as the receiver liked it, but I couldn’t help but feel like I had become Bongi Kim Seondal[2]Bongi Kim Seondal is a great swindler from a Korean’s old story.

‘It feels like I am just wasting their time.’

I finished the drawing as soon as possible and asked again.

“Is there anything else you want?”

“Gasp, then write something heart-fluttering!”

“Hmm, heart-fluttering words…”

In an environment where I couldn’t waste the time worrying, this non-specific request was really difficult.

However, this was also something I had heard more than twice in an hour of fan signing, so I gradually picked up speed.

I immediately wrote down a message under the lightstick.

[Today’s schedule for Park Moondae’s evening: Thinking of the Loviewer he met at the fan signing event]

“Gasp…”

“See you again.”

The fan staggered and was moved to the next seat by the staff. Since I had already held them out once, the staff was also determined this time, so I

couldn’t do anything about it.

‘As expected, mentioning the specific situation related to the other person is most effective.’

It would be better to add some personal feelings, but I couldn’t think of any in 20 seconds so it couldn’t be helped.

‘It seems I’ll really think about them in the evening.’

I stroked the back of my neck and waited for the next person to come, but there was no sign of them coming yet.

“Sejin, do you have a secret to being good on stage?”

“Um~ If noona tells me what’s good about it, I can make that my secret!”

“Wooow!”

It was because Keun Sejin was continuing the conversation almost as if he was doing some kind of stunt. It was so amazing that even the staff couldn’t use their hands.

‘It’s about time… ’

As I was looking at the camera calling my name, I heard a fan who just crossed over talking to Seon Ahyeon

“H-Hello.”

“Ah, yes. Hello.”

Maybe she wasn’t very interested in Seon Ahyeon, her voice didn’t sound very impressed.

“W-What’s your n-name?”

“Yes?”

I heard the fan ask in a slightly bitter voice.

“That, y-your name…!”

Seon Ahyeon asked once again, but his voice, which had become a little smaller, was rather muffled. I started to get a little annoyed by the other person’s tone.

“I can’t hear you very well…”

“I-I-I am sorry.”

“No.”

“…”

I didn’t feel good.

After that, Seon Ahyeon’s words were gone.

I glanced at him, but he was still signing the autograph.

“Hello!”

“Hello.”

Perhaps Keun Sejin’s words were over, another fan finally came to me. As I waited for the fan who was still waving with Keun Sejin to hold out her album, I heard voices from next to me again.

“T-This i-is…”

“Ah.”

It seemed Seon Ahyeon was giving the gift he had prepared.

Then, a slightly offended voice refused.

“Oh, that’s all right. It’s fine.”

“…!”

The fan sitting in front of Seon Ahyeon left her seat.

In fact, cases like this could happen.

There was no job where you only met kind people. That you didn’t get cursed at to your face was good enough, you probably would just feel offended and let it be.

The problem was this damn sickening feeling.

‘Stuttering, unfamiliar peers, rejection.’

These keywords were a triple crown.

It was at the level of someone tap dancing on Seon Ahyeon’s trauma switch.

“…”

Looking sideways, Seon Ahyeon was breaking out in a cold sweat.

*‘F*ck… ’*

If I was just a little bit late, it would be found out.

I snatched the pen from Seon Ahyeon’s hand. And immediately tore open the packaging.

“…!”

“This is a gift prepared by Ahyeon. May I sign it for you?”

“Wow! I love it!”

I immediately started signing an autograph, drawing Seon Ahyeon into the conversation.

“And Ahyeon said he’ll give noona what I’m using right now and another wrapped one.”

“Heol…? Really?”

“Of course. Isn’t that right?”

“…Y-Yes!”

Perhaps coming back to his sense, Seon Ahyeon began to answer.

‘His stiffness has disappeared.’

“Ooh, I love it. Why do I get two?”

“It’s a reward to thank you for accepting Keun Sejin’s long talk. Our member talks quite a lot.”

“Hey, you’re so mean!”

“Uahahaha.”

Listening in, Keun Sejin faded away after chiming once.

At this point, perhaps thinking it was all a joke, the fan laughed excitedly and took the pen.

“Thank you so much~ But how did you know I was older?”

“Keun Sejin from next to me had mentioned it about 10 times?”

“Hahaha…!”

Fortunately, the fan who smiled looking embarrassed spoke sincerely to Seon Ahyeon, the next in line, and exchanged conversations.

And Seon Ahyeon regained his composure before the next person came.

‘I’ve passed it for now.’

Fortunately, there was no other unexpected event until the end of the fan signing event that day.

* * *

“Are you okay?”

“…I-I am alright.”

In the car returning to the dorm, Seon Ahyeon’s condition was definitely better than before.

But his complexion was still pale.

And he murmured an apology again and again.

“I-I’m sorry… I-I almost c-caused trouble…”

“It’s not like that.”

It could create a troublesome scandal, but it wouldn’t hurt the group.

However, the problem was, if it went on like this, his mental state would be destroyed first.

‘If we get another fan signing event, I’ll keep worrying that the same situation will happen again.’

And then on the day when the ‘Grit’ trait was deactivated… It could really hurt the group. There would be a hole in the dance line.

“Do you have any plans to seek counseling?”

“…T-T-There’s no time…”

“If you tell your agency, I think they’ll cut it a bit. These days, there are many people who take a break from their activities because of this problem.”

It had been 4 weeks since the start of the activity, so if Seon Ahyeon said he couldn’t do it, they would accommodate him to some extent.

However, Seon Ahyeon hurriedly shook his head.

“W-We are going to get a vacation soon, s-so… I’ll do it then.”

“…”

It was for the media play, it seemed he was going to show it off for about three days.

I was just going to say, wouldn’t it be better to get it now, but Seon Ahyeon opened his mouth first.

“N-Now… I don’t want to. W-We’re still in the middle of activity and I-I don’t want to miss out on the schedule.”

He was so firm.

Since he said so, I decided to move on for now. Because it was the first time it happened.

“Hmm… Okay. I understand.”

“Hn…”

‘If Seon Ahyeon’s mood becomes weird, I can just contact his parents.’

This conversation didn’t leak out because we had a quiet conversation in the car with music playing. I decided to use earplugs to run away from Cha Eugene’s voice singing along to a pop song.

“…”

And when we arrived at the dorm.

The living room was filled with balloons.

“…?!”

- 1. hotteok = Korean sweet pancake
- 2. Bongi Kim Seondal is a great swindler from a Korean’s old story

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CHAPTER 87

“What is this…”

Ryu Chungwoo muttered while checking the living room that looked like it had been hit by a balloon bomb, then stopped himself. Maybe because he could see the rotating lens between the balloons.

The familiar reality show camera was back.

‘The reshoot starts today.’

We hadn’t had much time sticking around the dorm lately, so the reality show camera used to be short and thick only when selecting content and then it was gone.

‘I was already too worried about activities and daily content, so I couldn’t make full use of it anymore.’

However, since it was the first time it showed up on full-scale, the members hesitated to enter the living room.

And I found a large note amidst the swaying balloons. The note was so big that it occupied a quarter of the wall in the living room.

[Special! Testar’s 1st Place Celebration Trip]

“Huh?”

“…A trip?”

“A trip!”

Cha Eugene immediately approached the wall, kicking the balloons. The colorful balloons, apparently derived from the three pantone numbers which were chosen as official colors, floated in the air.

“It’s going to tear apart! What’s inside!”

“Eugene, be careful!”

“Oh.”

Cha Eugene quietly put down the note with a slightly downcast face, probably remembering the scolding he had gotten last time.

“That’s right, let’s check together.”

“Yes…”

I didn’t know if it was necessary to do this, but we all tore off the note together for the broadcast pictures.

“One, two, three!”

Then, a huge roulette wheel appeared.

‘…Roulette.’

Just by hearing the word, it felt like flashbacks were going to burst out.

But the members were excited at the smell of full-fledged travel content.

“Wow! What’s this?”

“Gamble?”

“It says here travel gamble!”

Like Kim Raebin said, <Travel Gamble> was written in large text at the top. And the explanation continued in proper handwriting below.

“Hm~ ‘You spin this roulette together to decide the concept of this trip… Testar’s friendship trip for 2 days and 1 night’! Wow, it’s real?”

“I love it!”

“S-Should we quickly spin it…!?”

Even Seon Ahyeon who had been a little listless stuck to the roulette in excitement. The roulette had a total of 7 slots, each with a different theme written on it.

[Healing, Mukbang, Adventure, Extreme, Theme Park, History.]

“Oh~”

The keywords were quite distinctive.

‘Healing would be the best.’

Looking at it, it was a schedule to go to the mountains and live in the countryside. It seemed the most easygoing and didn’t use up any energy other than for housework.

“I want to do *Adventure*.”

“Healing is nice.”

“It seems they put in mukbang for Moondae’s sake?”

Those who had been expressing their tastes for a while, probably thinking of their portions, soon couldn’t resist and excitedly stuck to the roulette.

“Let’s hold it together and spin it at the same time!”

“Let’s do that. Moondae, hurry up and come here too!”

“…Yes.”

Thanks to this, the camera caught a strange scene of the six of us spinning the roulette together.

‘Please let it be something heartwarming.’

I mumbled my wish and touched the roulette at the same time as the members.

“Oooh~”

“It’s working!”

‘Of course, it is, then did you think it wouldn’t?’

Perhaps we had spun it with too much power, the roulette wheel spun for quite a long time before finally stopping.

“Theme Park…!”

Despite Kim Raebin’s desperate words, the disc went beyond the theme park’s purple slot… and went all the way to the red.

“Oooh!”

And in the red column, the subject was written in a futuristic font.

[Extreme Travel]

“…Extreme?”

“Ah, *Extreme*!”

Cha Eugene finally realized the meaning of the pronunciation and raised both of his hands with a smile.

‘Cha Eugene, you like it?’

It was so ominous.

And after a while, Ryu Chungwoo’s smartphone received a text message from the production team.

[The concept of Testar’s trip this time is extreme~]

[We’ll serve with you an exciting concept where you can enjoy extreme fun! *^^*]

[※No takeback!]

“N-No takeback…?”

“Huh… Uh…”

The members’ complexion began to change as if the instincts trained in survival were triggered

“…”

I approached the roulette.

“Moondae?”

And I spun the roulette again.

Round and round, the spinning roulette…

It stopped on the extreme travel again.

I spun it again.

Round and round… *Thud*.

…Extreme travel.

And the members realized the situation.

“…!!”

“…It’s a scam!”

…By the way, the production team we met the next day laughed, saying that they had to make a schedule first, so of course, they couldn’t let us take all seven of them.

‘You bastards… ’

I felt their determination to somehow pull out the viewers’ ratings from the travel content.

…Really, I had a bad feeling.

* * *

[I checked late because of my schedule. Congratulations on winning first place on Music Core.]

[Thank you, sunbae-nim.]

It was getting ridiculous to reply to a text message as soon as I woke up in the morning.

The status message said he checked it late, but it kept coming.

For your information, the opponent was VTIC’s Cheongryeo.

‘This bastard is really exhausting.’

How could he have checked it late when he was also a candidate for first place?

Of course, any members could have told him on the same day. The triple crown had been stopped on public TV for three weeks in a row, there was no way they couldn’t have talked about it.

‘I think you’re contacting me on purpose to give in.’

Sure enough, a reply soon came.

[I hope to win first place sooner next time.]

It meant if we avoided and didn’t bother each other, each of us taking first place would be fine.

[Thank you. I hope you have a great day, sunbae-nim.]

*‘I can’t ignore this f*ker.’*

For now, I turned off the notification. I felt like sh*t every time I met the director, but these bastards were annoying too.

“Travel! Ready!”

“M-Moondae, you… g-get everything?”

“Yeah, wait a minute.”

As soon as I turned off my smartphone, a thumping noise began to ring out.

‘It’s the shooting for the leaving preparation… ’

It was the beginning of the reality travel content.

“That’s it?”

“Yeah.”

“Will you be okay?”

“Of course.”

When I brought my backpack, people intervened, commenting that my luggage seemed too small.

‘Well, it’s two days and one night.’

It was a package tour to wherever the production team wanted us to go anyway. Clothes and toothbrushing tools would be enough, right?

“What about snacks?”

“What?”

“What about snacks?”

“…Snacks.”

“Yes!”

“Let’s go buy it.”

“Yes…”

It seemed I had become a snack supply in Cha Eugene’s eyes.

‘I feel like I’ve become a bread shuttle.’

I couldn’t wrap my head around the cool title that I’d never worn in high school.

“Well then… We are finally going on our first trip~”

“Wow!”

“I hope we can make a lot of good memories!”

Anyway, the opening was good in front of the production team’s camera. Even though they had been tricked, everyone said it was a trip, so the atmosphere of excitement was evident.

‘It had been a tight schedule.’

Since the preparation for the debut album, we had been working without a break for about two months.

However, I should have already guessed what was going to happen from the moment the production team smiled at the members.

After about three hours.

We arrived at a rural village under a mountain at the end of Gyeonggi-do.

“Congratulations to Testar who have arrived at today’s first destination!”

“Wow!”

“The view is really nice!”

It was a bit hot, but the weather was definitely nice. The PD shouted through a loudspeaker to the members who were in a bright mood as it had been a while since our last outdoor activity.

“Your first extreme activity is… Skydiving!”

“…!?”

The atmosphere froze.

“You see that light airplane up there?”

Whir…

A black flying object flitted across the blue sky.

“You’re going to get in there and jump off.”

“…!!”

And it became a mess.

“Aaaaah!”

“This is completely safe… I’m safe…”

“Hahahahahaha!”

“…Is it impossible to give up halfway?”

“Ei, Getting on the airplane costs a lot~ They already paid for this.”

“…”

Lee Sejin’s face turned pale at the instructor’s casual reply.

‘What a mess.’

Still, the production team dropped the last bombshell.

– If you can’t do it, you can just come down. Instead, the next course doubles!

‘I think the fans will get mad at them for this.’

If someone really cried that they couldn’t do it, the curses would come out saying, ‘Why do you make the idol reality show unnecessarily sadistic?’, and they had to announce an apology.

However, that seemed unlikely.

“Then, let’s jump one by one!”

“Uaaaah!”

This was because these guys were surprisingly tenacious.

Maybe it was only natural since they were the ones who had endured far worse in Idol Inc.

Anyway, from Kim Raebin, who muttered to himself in the corner, to Cha Eugene, who stamped his feet with excitement, everyone jumped off safely

Having an instructor in the back must have played a part in them gaining some courage.

“Then, let’s go!”

“Y-Yes…!!”

Seon Ahyeon also jumped down without any problems.

‘It’s my turn next.’

My turn came out last again. I recalled Idol Inc’s surprise VCR.

‘It’s not scary at all.’

It’s not like I’m going to die or get hurt, so what can I say? I just didn’t understand why we should be spending money on this.

“Then~ Let’s run together. Take a deep breath.”

“Yes.”

“Oh, this fellow has the strongest heart~ Let’s go!”

Whiff.

The wind pierced my face.

“…Ha!”

“It’s nice, right~?”

It was great.

…I didn’t even think about it.

The blue sky was everywhere.

Mountains and fields spread endlessly over the blue horizon.

The sun stung my eyes, but it wasn’t hot. The wind swirled.

“Then, the parachute~”

Thud, with a feeling of pressure, the body stopped slowly in the air and began to move with the wind.

I felt a great sense of freedom.

“Great ride! Grab this and… Let’s push like this!”

“…”

If I had lived as Ryu Gunwoo, would I have thought of doing this?

‘Never.’

I would have asked why I had to spend money to jump from the sky.

But I was doing it now.

And there were so many things like that.

Accomplishments, performances, fans, cheers… The feeling of living my life.

‘…It’s strange.’

Status abnormality or whatever, it was good.

Strangely, I liked that I was Park Moondae.

“Now, let’s land!”

The moment I landed on the ground, those who went down first laughed and waved.

“Moondae has arrived~”

…Well this extreme travel didn’t sound so bad. I stepped on the ground laughing.

* * *

Did I say it didn’t sound so bad?

“Then, today’s second extreme experience! It is~ ‘Invitation to the Haunted House’!”

“Aaah!”

I took it back. The production team suck.

“Do you see that building in front of you?”

“Yes…!”

“I can see it, but…!”

The members who were certified as scaredy-cats were already crying.

The PD excitedly talked through the loudspeaker.

“This time, it’s a horror experience set and operated by a professional team that makes a visit to Korea!”

“Uaaah…”

“They only open it this summer, so we can only do it now!”

This detailed explanation… It meant this was a PPL.

Lee Sejin muttered beside me with a gloomy face.

“I just have to endure it this summer…”

“…”

I know, right.

“Then, everyone, please divide into groups to join the ‘Invitation to the Haunted House’!”

“We…! We have bad memories of making groups…!”

“We will enter together!”

…But of course, it didn’t work, and Testar began to be divided into groups.

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CHAPTER 88

…Unexpected extreme horror experience… The number of people was divided using common sense.

“We can divide it into two, two, and three.”

“Phew…”

The scaredy-cats’ complexions improved when they were told they weren’t going to enter alone. Especially, Kim Raebin.

“T-Then… how are we going to divide it?”

“I want to go with Chungwoo hyung!”

“Me, too!”

Ryu Chungwoo’s stock price suddenly started to rise.

‘…Certainly, he’s particularly reliable in this area.’

Ryu Chungwoo looked around and opened his mouth with a smile.

“Haha, then including me… Um, should I go together with Raebin and Moondae?”

“Thank you!”

“Ei~ Then it’s no fun! Chungwoo hyung-nim, it’s only fun when you make a two-people group!”

Keun Sejin started to sprinkle vinegar on the rice.

(TL notes: sprinkle vinegar on the rice = making things go wrong by interfering with things that are going well.)

‘This bastard is really… ’

I was afraid of horror movies so I supposed that concept was correct.

“Hmm, is that so?”

“Of course!”

…And because Ryu Chungwoo was persuaded by Keun Sejin, the groups were designated by the person who won the rock-paper-scissors until the end.

“Hey~ so that’s what happened.”

*‘F*ck.’*

The most ridiculous thing about this was that Keun Sejin survived until the final.

‘Isn’t someone who says things like that usually get ruined in the end?’

Keun Sejin smiled and formed a group in an instant.

So I…

“Aaaaah!!”

“Get out! Get out!”

With the crazy combination of Keun Sejin and Cha Eugene, we explored the haunted house.

With this combination, I felt like my eardrums would burst out first before I could get out…

I managed to ask Cha Eugene.

"…You're not afraid of horror movies."

I thought he wasn't afraid of ghosts and was just weak against gross things. However, Cha Eugene jumped up at every step as if he had stepped on a frog alive.

"Just watching it is fine! I hate real ones! Only the fake ones are fine!"

"…"

'Isn't this completely fake in a sense… '

But this… It wasn't a matter of convincing him, so let's move on.

Instead, I asked Keun Sejin.

"Why did you choose me?"

"What can I say… It's my conscience calling? I want to join the three-person group, but my inner self cried that it wouldn't be fair if I brought someone brave."

"…"

"So, I decided to show the three scaredy-cats how to overcome it!"

What a load of crap.

…Hmm, let's not forget that we had cameras in our foreheads.

"…Let's move first."

“Okay, then~”

“Let’s go quickly…”

…We had to consider the shortest distance.

“By the way, Moondae, where do you think the ‘suspicious sign’ is?”

“…”

It was also a problem.

In this ‘Invitation to the Haunted House’, each group had a mission to carry out, which was to find a ‘suspicious sign’ and took a picture. We had to get at least one!

“They said they’d give us a gift if we find a lot of them and take a lot of pictures! Let’s explore and challenge ourselves!”

“…Sounds great!”

Even Cha Eugene started acting recklessly, perhaps he was hooked on by keywords gift and explore.

There was no solution.

“…Then, let’s go through the hallway first and enter the smallest door.”

The staff had to be waiting in the largest and most prominent room…!

“You usually hide things in that kind of place. Let’s search through things that don’t stand out first.”

“Wow, that’s a great idea~ So, the person who provides the idea will take the lead, right?”

“…”

I really wanted to quit.

However, the front side was better than the back side, so I stood in front of them, feeling like choosing the lesser evil.

“Alright.”

“Wow~ That’s so cool! I’m scared, so I’ll go to the back~”

Still, he didn’t want to shake hands with Cha Eugene at the back, but Keun Sejin still went to the back on his own. He showed a firm determination to get a good amount of reaction.

“Okay then, let’s go!”

“Let’s go!”

“…”

I walked slowly down the hallway. Inside the dark wooden building, the musty smell of mold stung my nose.

“Moondae! Blood!”

“…!!”

I almost cursed. I just turned my head and gritted my teeth, and then answered.

“Stop shouting…!”

Keun Sejin put on an apologetic expression.

“Okay, I’m sorriiieh?!”

“Aaaaah!!”

“…?!”

…I turned my head forward.

A woman was there. She was wearing an employee’s outfit that could only be worn in a movie that was set 50 years ago.

But she didn’t have feet.

And she didn’t have eyes.

There was only blood.

“Gyaaah!!!”

“Huaaaah!! Run!”

…As I ran into the next room with these screaming guys, I realized that this group was already doomed.

* * *

“…”

When I came out, the sun was setting.

It meant it had taken an hour to get out of that crazy haunted house.

‘It’s a 25-minute course.’

I had no idea how embarrassing it would look on the broadcast…

“…My throat hurts.”

“You, too? Mine as well.”

The two had screamed so hard and were drinking like crazy after receiving an ion drink from the production team.

Of course, Keun Sejin screamed for fun, so he inflicted it on himself as his karma.

Perhaps bothered by the group who spent twice as longer than the expected time, Seon Ahyeon asked.

By the way, the Seon Ahyeon and Lee Sejin duo took three pictures in 20 minutes and came out looking for an exit.

…It was a huge reality check.

“A-Are you okay?”

“…Well. So-so.”

This was really an experience that I couldn’t understand why anyone would be wasting their money on.

‘No, even if I get paid.’

I didn’t want to go in again if I got a minimum wage.

“Moondae, you’ve worked hard~ Hey, thank you.”

“Thank you!”

Because it was all caught on camera, it wouldn’t be ridiculous if I claimed that I had carried this group. I nodded slowly.

Still, since we came out after taking pictures, this situation was much better than running away.

“Huft…”

“I’m back.”

When the last team, Ryu Chungwoo and Kim Raebin, returned in 35 minutes, the PD began to speak again.

“Thank you for your hard work~ You have to get dinner now!”

“Don’t tell me… Is the dinner extreme, too?”

“Of course!”

“Huh…”

Without a camera, there would have been a riot, but with a camera here, they could only groan.

“Extreme~ grilled pork!”

“Ooooh!”

“Grilled meat!”

Fortunately, the production team seemed to know that it was the right time to release us.

Soon after, in the vacant lot next to the haunted house, a pork barbecue began to turn over in the fire.

‘It’s already grilled.’

Looking at the fire, it seemed the campfire was there to keep the meat warm.

Anyway, the members were happy with the incredible sight. Except for Raebin who still seemed to be out of it.

“Thank you for the food~”

“Thank you!”

The taste wasn’t as overwhelming as it looked, but the meat was delicious as always.

* * *

The gift I got from the photos taken at the haunted house… was an animal pajama.

‘I’ve gotten another pair like this.’

In total, I had gotten more than five sets of gifts.

Anyway, seeing that they gave us seven sets, they were practically asking the members to wear these to sleep during the reality trip.

‘It’s not difficult.’

So at 8 pm, all Testar members sitting in the living room of the pension were wearing animal pajamas.

“The three scaredy-cats did a good job, so we’re wearing it together.”

“I like it.”

“I-It’s cute and nice.”

Seeing these guys talking enthusiastically in case it might be a PPL, I felt like they had already become broadcasters.

Anyway, it was free time from now on until the time to sleep.

But of course, it didn’t mean I was free to do whatever I wanted.

‘It means we’re picking out the contents ourselves.’

Well… It could be playing karaoke, playing board games, or writing a heartfelt letter to each other. It meant we should do something we seemed comfortable with.

“Huft~ Since we’re bored, shall we play truth or dare?”

Like that.

“T-Truth or dare?”

“Hn. I saw a lie detector earlier.”

“Is that so? That’s fine.”

But over there, Kim Raebin, who was pondering on something, intervened.

“Hmm, since we’ve spent the day playing, I’d like to do something a little more productive in the evening.”

The members quickly came to their senses at the ominous keyword.

“Productive…”

“Raebin, don’t tell me what we’re going to do… Is it that?”

“Yes!”

“…”

There was a brief silence for a moment.

However, Lee Sejin unexpectedly stepped in.

“…What do you want to do?”

“Ah, it’s making a new song.”

“-!? What?

“N-New song?”

“Yes. Actually, there’s a song I was working on a while ago! I also brought portable recording equipment just in case.”

Kim Raebin excitedly brought out his bag.

In an instant, everyone tried to intervene.

“Raebin! If we do this wrong, it will be a spoiler~”

“That’s right. And I think it’s better to start after finishing this activity first.”

“…? Is that so?”

Kim Raebin lowered his smartphone with a perplexed face. He looked like he didn’t expect this reaction at all.

‘…He’s not sociable, but he’s not a fool.’

Let’s piece it all together.

“A new song isn’t the goal for the title track of the next album.”

“Ah, yes!”

Only then Kim Raebin looked like he had caught on.

“The one I made is a fan song!”

“…Ah!”

An unstoppable attack had appeared.

If a reaction like ‘That’s too much’ came out here, we could be subjected to clever editing, making us look like we didn’t want to make a song for our fans.

Of course, it would no longer be the production team’s editing anymore. I was talking about the aggro’s.

[The dialogue scene from Testar’s reality show today]

[It’s fine VS It sucks, Testar’s remark]

…It was already obvious that we would occupy the popular posts in the community in this way.

Fortunately, Keun Sejin immediately opened his mouth.

“Fan song sounds good? I really want to make it!”

Let’s fire support.

“It’s going to be fun. The timing is perfect.”

“…It will be fine.”

“I-It sounds good.”

Kim Raebin just looked proud at the sudden change of attitude.

“Thank you…!”

It wasn’t his intention, but it was the only time I’d ever seen Kim Raebin win through politics.

* * *

On a leisurely weekday afternoon, Testar’s fans were having a good time reviewing the contents poured out during their activities.

– Among the music video interpretations on WeTube, I think this one is the best (link)

– Classical musicians’ Magical Boy reaction video is up!

– Can anyone tell me when the High Five that they did in the red jumper was aired?

└Last week’s Music Night!

└Thank you

After beating VTIC and winning first place in Music Song, the aggro tried to make them fight with VTIC fans somehow, but it didn’t turn into a big problem.

It was after VTIC finished their domestic activities anyway, so it was a factor that could be put aside in their fandom.

Thanks to this, Testar’s fans had a relatively peaceful time when they received an SNS notification.

It was from Testar’s account.

‘Who is it?’

Because the members dropped by quite often, the fans just happily clicked on the notification without much tension.

[Please accept my heart (WeTube link)]

‘Accept heart?’

‘…??’

‘Dating… It’s not about dating, right?’

Fans clicked on the link half worried and half confused.

And on the thumbnail, they saw seven people wearing animal pajamas.

‘…!!’

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CHAPTER 89

The title of Testar’s video that suddenly popped up was as followed.

[Testar(TeSTAR) – The Magic Is You]

It was a title that didn’t sound very official and had no special description attached.

And most of all, seeing Testar wearing animal pajamas, it somehow looked like the content of a behind-the-scene cam.

‘Nice~’

Fans happily clicked play.

Then an unfamiliar accompaniment began to flow. It was a refreshingly smooth medium tempo of an electric piano.

In addition, Testar, which was spread out in the indoor space, got up and made a formation.

‘…??’

New song? Cover?

In front of fans who were taken aback, their vocals rang out.

– I’m feeling good today,

I think something good will happen

– If it’s you, everything’s gonna be fine

It’s strange, but somehow it’ll be great

A good melody that didn’t feel excessive.

And Testar in animal pajamas jumped into the air once and started dancing.

The cloth in the shape of animal ears fluttered over their heads.

“…!”

Fans’ shouts began to fill SNS in real time.

– I thought it was the reality show’s behind-the-scenes, but it’s a new song. Click on it right away

– Hurry up and watch the video on the kids’ account, it’s crazy

- Cute

The dance was pretty basic with extra cuteness added.

However, thanks to the animal pajamas and the free gestures and movements on the camera, it didn’t look silly.

– The reality shines like a dream

In my dreams, I dream of a wonderful tomorrow

When I meet you tomorrow,

I’ll only tell you the sparkling dreams

Cha Eugene in a snow leopard pajama came out waving his tail with one hand and hummed the verse.

And he sprinkled pollen to match the lyrics.

Seon Ahyeon, dressed in deer pajamas, appeared between the pollen.

– My dreams that won’t be locked

It makes reality run fast

Reality is breathing~ Yeh

YES breathing (breathing!)

Hoo-ha! Hoo-ha!

Perhaps it was because of embarrassment due to the reaction of the people around him or maybe it was because of the sudden hip-hop arrangement, Seon Ahyeon made a dance-like movement that was uncharacteristic of him.

And at this point, the fans realized.

‘It’s the lyrics of Magical Boy!’

The words derived from the lyrics of ‘Magical Boy’ were cheerfully reassembled to form the feeling of a strenuous day.

And they all thought at the same time.

‘It’s Kim Raebin.’

‘This is Kim Raebin.’

It was the impact of the Moon Rabbit contest.

Meanwhile, the song entered the pre-chorus.

– I'll run breathlessly (Umm~)

Will you smile when you see me?

Park Moondae in a white puppy pajama came out to the center and suddenly knelt down.

'…??'

And he started to imitate Keun Sejin, the center of the Magical Boy's ending choreography.

Of course, it was a gag, but he worked hard.

The fans laughed out loud.

–

– Random Moondae comes out once again

– He's about to faint behind Keun Sejin

– Someone, please make a quick meme from Moondae's part, I'll have to watch it regularly

The part ended with the members picking Park Moondae back up to quell the riot.

Meanwhile, the lyrics were sweet.

– Even if there's nothing that doesn't change

(Even so)

The magic of this moment

– Maybe it’s YOU~

After singing the last pre-chorus, Testar began to perform the choreography beautifully in the chorus.

Keun Sejin, wearing a black baby bear mask, was the center.

– I’m feeling good today,

I think something good will happen

(Ooh- yeah!)

– If it’s you, everything’s gonna be fine

It’s strange, but somehow it’ll be great

Thanks to the pleasant lyrics and Keun Sejin’s large movements, the chorus was stretched out like a great choreography video.

But then Kim Raebin came out next, wearing, a pink rabbit pajama.

It was the peak of the imbalance.

– Raebin’s pink

– What’s going on with the medieval rabbit

– But it’s so cute Raebin, do whatever you want But let’s get permission

Holding a carrot pen as if it was a microphone, Kim Raebin hummed the rap.

– LIFE is strange

Kick off lightly and climb up

Walking on top of the sky

Even if it rains, I don’t know

My life

– bright, pouring light

All right, you’re right

I’m shining today

The sight of Testar’s animal ears flapping around as they banged their head as if it was some kind of rock festival was the best.

-

– I’m glad you guys are happy

The video continued in this manner with a spoonful of humor.

But at the last bit, they ended it seriously with a slightly embarrassed smile.

– My meeting with you yesterday

Becomes today’s shining dream

It becomes the magic of tomorrow

Right, the magic is you.

The video ended with Testar holding hands and bowing together.

–

– Why are you suddenly uploading a video like this without notice? These good kids

– The quality of life suddenly rises sharply

– I don’t know who made the animal pajamas, but please feed me Korean beef

Fans enjoyed the new song and video that was suddenly dropped so much that they were about to have indigestion. But at the same time, they had questions.

– Is this a new song?

– It seems to be a new song, but I searched and couldn’t find it

– Heol, is it okay to release a new song like this?

– It didn’t even come up on music sites ;;; It’s not the agency’s fault, is it?

┗Crazy

Fans who had experienced the failure of an agency that had done a poor job several times suddenly became anxious. No matter how they thought about this, it was strange.

Fortunately, less than half an hour later, a new post was uploaded to Testar’s account.

[It’s a small gift from Testar to Loviewer who gave us so many things from our debut to winning 1st place. I love you ♡

‘The Magic is You’

Soundcloudy: (link)]

Fans lost their mind at the fan song that was released for free.

– It’s a fan song?!

– No way, are you giving it for free because it is a gift?

– No, guys, I’m so thankful, but just release the song on the music sites… Considering the results of the year-end awards, it’s a waste to release it at this timing

└The song is good, so it feels even more wasteful

– When did you make this again? You guys don’t look like you have time to sleep… But thank you. You guys are so cute

Fans were delighted with Testa’s unexpected gift, but they were also distressed, saying, ‘This song is easy to listen to’ and ‘If it had been released on the music site, it would have gone up all the way’.

Of course, most of them were touched.

-Testar is magic. This situation where the singer returns the meme in reverse… It’s so nice?

– It’s not going to just humanly end with this…? When we get a concert at the end of the year… We’re going to add more choreography to the fan song and sing along…? Just imagining it makes me feel great

– How did you come up with the idea of making a fan song with the lyrics of the first-place song – I knew it, Kim Rabbit is a genius, as expected of the arranger of the first-place song

└It probably wasn’t Kim Raebin. All of Testar might take part in writing the lyrics

└ Who are you, what you’re doing is obvious, so get out of my account

– If it comes out in the next album, I’ll buy it… The fan favorite’s version with the lyrics of the official album art

Anyway, most of the fans were happy, and Testar who was monitoring them was also happy.

* * *

“Working on it on this trip is worth it.”

“I know, right. We filmed it in a hurry, but it came out well~”

“I like the pajamas.”

Cha Eugene, still wearing his snow leopard pajamas, smiled.

The current time was 1:30 pm. It was time to pick up the last content for the extreme travel.

‘…Honestly, I didn’t expect that from the production team.’

In fact, from last evening to this morning, we spent all of our time recording the fan song and making the video.

It was because the production crew, who was hooked on fan song production content, gave us time.

‘Thanks to that, we got the draft and managed to complete it.’

Still, the announcement was planned to come out later, but it seemed the production crew had persuaded the company to release it now.

It was supposed to be used for the reality show’s promotion.

Perhaps on next week’s notice, there would be a phrase like ‘The production of the fan song’. And the actual production would come out the week after that… Well, the format was like that.

Anyway, everyone’s faces were bright because the response was good.

“…Shall we go eat now?”

“Yes.”

I skipped breakfast to practice the choreography. I was hungry.

Fortunately, the production team took us to a nearby restaurant out of their guilty conscience. It was a duck jumulleok[1]jumulleok = short steak marinated with sesame oil, salt, and pepper. Sumber: Wiki. restaurant, each person seemed to eat almost three servings.

“Thank you for the meal~”

“I-It was delicious.”

“Moondae-ssi, do you have any detailed review?”

“The sweet and spicy taste is well-balanced and the meat quality is good. And I keep going in because the rice tastes good. Are you happy now?”

“Oh~”

And the next activity was… Valley rafting.

“You’re falling over there! Watch out!”

“Uaaah!”

Smack! The valley's water splashed on my face like a water bomb. Meanwhile, I had to keep rowing.

"Come on, everyone! If one person makes a mistake, everyone falls into the water! Let's take care of each other!"

"Ye… Yes!"

Exerting strength while being hit by water on a rocking boat… It was more like labor.

"Hurray!"

But some of the members looked quite excited. Especially Cha Eugene and Ryu Chungwoo.

I didn't understand what kind of fun this was. But I knew one thing.

'…Are you telling me to use as many calories as I ate?'

Somehow, it was a format that seemed to have been tipped off by the company.

I rowed silently, unable to shake off the thought that the duck jumulleok was the main culprit.

"Yeah~ that's how you move your arms-"

It was an experience that reminded me of my part-time job at a factory.

* * *

"Thank you for your hard work~"

"It was fun!"

After rafting, the afternoon passed quickly after washing and changing clothes at a nearby facility. It was time to wrap up the shoot.

With the camera set up, we continued to settle in a nearby spot that had good scenery.

“Wow, really… I made good use of my time here.”

“It was really fun because it felt like we were on a trip together. Thank you for letting me have a good time.”

Half sincere and half for broadcast, the members laughed and exchanged ending remarks.

‘N-Next time… If there’s a chance, I-I’d like to go on a trip together.”

But this one seemed to be completely sincere.

“Okay, let’s go on another trip together.”

“Agree~”

“It would be nice to go abroad.”

…Wait, did the other guys actually mean it?

“Then, the fans will see us come back with great performances!”

“Until now~ this is Testar’s Living Together TEST!”

The members enthusiastically waved their hands after the set ending remarks. Of course, I did too.

“Thank you for watching.”

“See you again!”

That was how the filming ended.

“Cut! Thank you for your hard work~”

“Yes!”

“Thank you!”

First of all, thanks to the successful completion of another schedule, everyone’s faces were bright.

Perhaps it was true that this filming was quite fun.

“It’s nice and close to Seoul. I hope I can come with my family next time.”

“It was alright.”

Listening to Ryu Chungwoo and Lee Sejin talking, I returned the microphone installed on my body, and suddenly the manager come running from the side.

“…?”

“Raebin, wait…”

The manager took Kim Raebin to a nearby corner.

And he returned Kim Raebin’s smartphone, which he had left out while playing in the water, and whispered something.

Then, Kim Raebin’s face turned pale.

“…!”

- 1. jumulleok = short steak marinated with sesame oil, salt, and pepper. Sumber: Wiki.

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CHAPTER 90

I’d never seen Kim Raebin’s complexion change that much.

The members who were scattered and doing their own business noticed right away.

“Raebin, what’s wrong? Hyung, what’s going on?”

When Ryu Chungwoo approached and asked quietly, the manager took Ryu Chungwoo with him and left somewhere.

“…”

If complicated personal circumstances occurred, there was a high probability that he would be reluctant if anyone interfered.

It was fine with Ryu Chungwoo because he had a strong sense of leadership, but I didn’t know what Kim Raebin would think if other members interfered.

‘First of all, let’s look into the situation some more.’

Sure enough, after a while, the manager returned with Ryu Chungwoo.

Kim Raebin had already disappeared.

“…What about Raebin?”

“Wait. Let’s talk after the filming is over.”

The manager seemed to be concerned about the staff around us. Having grasped the situation, the members kept their mouths shut and continued what they were doing. Then, after a short farewell with the production team, we got into the car and heard the whole story.

“His grandmother collapsed?”

“Yes, so he went to the hospital right away.”

“…”

The members’ faces changed because they already knew that Kim Raebin lived with his grandparents.

I clicked my tongue… I didn’t feel good.

‘…Still, you let him go.’

It was the end of the activity, and it seemed he was contacted at the end of the day’s schedule, so they sent him off right away without complaints. I wouldn’t say anything unnecessary.

…Wait a minute.

The bad news was well-timed… Was it possible?

“Hyung, when did you get contacted?”

“W-What?”

“When did you get contacted when Kim Raebin’s grandmother collapsed?”

“…”

The manager had a slightly sad face.

“…I was contacted at the end of your valley rafting, but my phone was turned off and left behind… It was only when the shoot was over that I checked.”

“…!”

The atmosphere froze.

“Then… Even if Raebin already left.”

“M-Maybe it’s too late…”

“That won’t happen! I’ve been getting in touch.”

The manager hastily added an explanation.

“…Yes.”

At least, the atmosphere in the car eased.

I observed the manager.

‘Could it be that you’d checked beforehand and didn’t tell him?’

It was possible.

‘The shooting was going to be over, so in order to pick out the cut, you could pretend and send him off.’

Anyway, whether Kim Raebin left or not, if they rationalized that his grandmother wouldn’t just suddenly get better…

No. It was too much. Whether it was the manager or the company, they weren’t that unethical.

Besides, if it was really the case, he wouldn’t have told us honestly like this.

I held back my sigh and leaned back.

“…Grandmother, what should I do?”

I heard a sniffle next to me.

Cha Eugene was crumpled in the corner with a gloomy face.

‘You must have met her in person.’

Ryu Chungwoo struggled to open his mouth.

“It will be fine. Later… Let’s call Raebin.”

“Yes…”

The atmosphere in the car was gloomy. Even Keun Sejin shook his head when his eyes met mine as if he didn’t know what to say.

“Hmm…”

Lee Sejin turned his head out the window as if suffocated by the atmosphere.

In such a gloomy atmosphere, the car ran and headed to the dorm.

The insanely lively schedule for the past two days and one night ended as if it was all a lie.

* * *

It was dawn past midnight when Kim Raebin returned to the dorm.

“…!”

“You’re here.”

Some of the members sitting in the living room were still up.

Seon Ahyeon and Lee Sejin, who had photo schedules tomorrow morning, went to sleep at the manager’s insistence.

‘It was wise because we didn’t know when Kim Raebin would come in.’

And the judgment was correct. It was now half past three in the morning.

“Did you take a taxi?”

“…Yes.”

Kim Raebin’s face was swollen from crying, but he didn’t look particularly upset.

‘I guess it wasn’t a big deal.’

I opened my mouth.

“Is your grandmother okay?”

“Yes… She went to the hospital right away, and she’ll have almost no side effects.”

As it turned out, his grandmother had collapsed from a cerebral hemorrhage. Fortunately, Kim Raebin’s sister found her quickly and the treatment was over within the golden hour.

“Thank God…”

“Really, I am glad, Raebin.”

“You must have had a hard time. It was hard, right? Good work.”

“…Thank you.”

Perhaps he was crying again, Raebin came into the living room rubbing his eyes hard. The welcome and consolation continued.

“Did you have dinner?”

“…No.”

“Ugh.”

“You must have had a hard time, but it would be better to eat something and sleep.”

It was true.

‘…It can’t be helped.’

I sighed and volunteered. With this lineup, I was the fastest among them.

“…Sit down. I’ll warm up something.”

“I-It’s fine!”

“It’s dawn. Lower your voice.”

“Yes…”

After confirming that the situation was okay, the members got up with more relaxed faces and stretched out.

“Then Raebin, get some rest. Moondae, take care~”

“Yes…”

“Eat well and go to sleep.”

“Great job.”

Finally, Cha Eugene tapped Kim Raebin on the shoulder and entered his room.

There was another group schedule tomorrow afternoon.

Once we confirmed that it wasn’t a big deal, it would be more burdensome to sit as a group in front of the kid and watch him eat.

‘I should finish this quickly and go back.’

I heated up the instant rice and stew in moderation and served them. It was a wise decision to order another one for dinner just in case.

“Here.”

“Thank you…”

After confirming that Kim Raebin was eating, I turned around to enter my room and realized.

‘…Isn’t it strange to eat alone at dawn in this situation?’

It was good to be sad. So one or two people staying would be right.

Besides, I was entrusted with this.

‘…Still, this is right.’

I sat across from him.

Kim Raebin was eating quietly.

Then, he couldn’t finish half of it and put down his spoon.

“…It doesn’t taste good?”

“No…”

Kim Raebin lowered his head and murmured.

“Grandmother, I made sure she’s okay… Still… I feel strange.”

“…Why?”

“N-Next time, this situation happens again, and if I see her late again, and… Back then, it was really… If it was real.”

“…Um.”

“Even if I am not late, during the performance, during the filming… Is it right to stop and leave? But then… I feel like I lack professional skills.”

“…”

“Continuously… I can’t stop thinking about that.”

…It was a reasonable concern.

And it was also a concern that anyone who separated their jobs from their lives would have.

You were busy working, and then one day, something fatal happened… What would you do if you were doing something very important when you got the call?

The problem was that Kim Raebin wasn’t even an adult yet.

Was this the kind of work environment where it was normal to worry about that at the age where you couldn’t even drink legally… I didn’t know, honestly.

‘I have nothing to say if you ask whether we’re pro because we made money.’

That kind of call… Those who hadn’t experienced it didn’t understand.

“…”

This was difficult. I never thought I’d say this at dawn.

After thinking about it, I opened my mouth.

“When I got the call… I was at school.”

“…!”

“I was in class, so I put my phone on silent… I didn’t see it until quite a while later. The exam was just around the corner.”

“…”

There were 24 absences.

I still thought about it. What if I hadn’t gone to school…

I wonder what would have changed if I hadn’t gone to school and tagged along to that family event… It was a meaningless thought.

“At that time, I was so much less busy than you are, and I was just a student. So this… I think the problem of the timing is, in fact, a matter of luck.”

“…Ah.”

“Besides, you’re not going to live on a schedule like this for the rest of your life. If you have more experience, you can adjust the schedule as much as you want.”

I rubbed the back of my neck and continued

“But if you’re still worried, when your family contacts you, tell the manager to check it out. Besides, there’s no problem even if you leave in the middle of work.”

“…!”

“Everyone lives like that. If anyone curses at you, they’re a psychopath so just sue them.”

“…”

Kim Raebin, who hadn’t answered for a long time, eventually nodded.

“…Yes.”

“Are you feeling better?”

“…Yes!”

Kim Raebin replied slightly more forcefully. And he lifted the spoon again… It was a relief that he seemed to have gained some energy.

‘Looking at the speed, I can go to my room in five minutes.’

I felt relieved and checked my watch… Um, it looked like the sun would rise when I went in.

‘Day and night are switching once again… ’

I heard my body’s internal clock shattering. When I got a vacation, I had to set a pattern of going to bed at 9:00 pm and waking up at 9:00 the next day.

“Hyung.”

“What is it?”

“Can I ask you something?”

“…You can.”

Kim Raebin cleaned up the table after finishing his food and carefully opened his mouth.

“I think you said you have amnesia, but I am not sure how you can remember the incident from that time…”

“…I suddenly remembered in my sleep.”

“Ah, I see.”

He was really a consistent guy.

* * *

Testar’s reality travel episode sparked cheers from fans as soon as the news article came out.

– Hurray! Travel!

– It was so much fun at the beginning of Testar’s reality show, but these days, it’s so boring that I only watched the clips. The production team finally come back to their senses

-There’s a talk about a sighting in a valley, it seems to be a healing content and playing together in the countryside I am looking forward to it

And when the trailer came out, the reaction doubled.

– Crazy extreme!

– Skydiving and playing in a haunted house? Wow, you really save up the most important things

– Moondae and a Haunted House? This is where the stocks all poured in!

– Heol… I think they made the fan song at this time too – Even though they only show one cut of the kids making it, it’s so cute

– As expected, Raebin was the one leading. The bastards who tried to beat down Raebin saying they all did it together, go die

– They seem to eat well, I am relieved

└ This was completely my reaction

– I was worried that they weren’t fed well, but a whole pig came out

Fans looked forward to the first episode of the reality trip which came out in a few days.

And at the same time, they scraped together the rumors and speculations with regret, wondering if there was any other entertainment content.

Then they saw an unverified anonymous post.

: <Let’s Get Close First> This time, the guests are VT Chgry and Tst Pk Mdae. One was cast and personally nominated the other. Everyone is whispering that the ratings will be good.

It was saying that VTIC Cheongryeo was filming a variety show with Park Moondae.

Under this absurd claim, of course, there were mocking reactions.

– ? What kind of bullshit is this

– I saw a good delusion

– This bastard thought they were best friends after seeing Cheongryeo and Park Moondae greet each other

– Kya these days, the reaction to low-level aggro is different, the world is getting better

Of course, the fans didn’t believe it either and skipped it over.

But a few days later.

An official article was published.

[<Let’s Get Close First>, Next guest is VTIC and Testar? (Exclusive)]

: According to an MBS official on the 21st, <Let’s Get Close First> recently announced that VTIC’s Cheongryeo and Testar’s Park Moondae are scheduled to be filmed as guests…

-???

– What’s this

– For real?

It was real.

After a while, a preview video produced by <Let’s Get Close First> appeared.

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CHAPTER 91

<Let’s Get Close First>’s preview video began by showing past guests.

After showing the appearances of huge celebrities, it showed the new guest at the climax.

[This guest is…]

[VTIC!]

Behind the caption, VTIC’s numerous records and activities passed. And one of the members was zoomed in. It was a famous scene where they gave a greeting and received an award at an international award ceremony.

[VTIC’s leader]

[Cheongryeo]

[Who does he want to be friends with?]

Soon after, a new screen appeared.

[One day in July 202X]

[Cheongryeo: Hello, I’m VTIC’s Cheongryeo.]

It was a pre-meeting video featuring Cheongryeo in plain clothes.

[Q: What are the criteria for selecting the person you want to be friends with?]

[Cheongryeo: I guess… A fellow singer? (Laugh)]

[Cheongryeo: Actually, I've been focusing on my activities, so I've rarely met fellow singers.]

A small caption saying 'A Workaholic's Lamentation' appeared and disappeared.

[Q: If you can only ask for one person?]

[Cheongryeo: It's difficult. (Laugh)]

[Cheongryeo: Actually, there's someone I've been paying attention to lately.]

[Cheongryeo: I think he's kind of similar to me.]

Cheongryeo's voice that came out next was covered with a 'beep-' sound.

The shape of his mouth was also obscured, so no clues could be gathered from it.

But the next moment, almost everyone could guess who Cheongryeo was pointing at.

It was because only some part of <Idol Inc.>'s 'Just Me' performance was zoomed in and broadcasted in blurry quality.

It meant that since it all was leaked in the article anyway, they were openly giving a hint.

[Who is the 'similar fellow singer' pointed out by Cheongryeo?]

[It will be revealed next week in <Let's Get Close First>!]

And the comments were already occupied with spoilers.

– It’s Park Moondae

– Anyone can see that it’s Park Moondae

– Wow, Cheongryeo-nim, you rarely show up on variety shows, but finally I’m looking forward to your chemistry with your hubae!

– Wow, it’s going to be very fun

The best comments were basically like these.

It was another story if you arranged it by the latest order or went to SNS, but at any rate, the expectations of the general viewers were high.

It was rare for male idols to secure popularity, and among them, those two, who hadn’t made solo appearances in entertainment shows, showed up in a public entertainment show.

And for one of the two, it was his first appearance in a public entertainment show, so the fans were completely excited.

– Gasp, Moon Puppy’s solo entertainment

– This program is really fun and I’m looking forward to the type of program Moondae will do well

– Finally, my wish is fulfilled… Holding-out wins 1 score. I’m so touched.

– (This soul is already on the defense. Please pass by)

There were definitely lingering conflicts caused by VTIC’s overlapping activities and dissatisfaction from Testar’s individual fans.

But it didn’t blow up. It was because Testar’s individual fans would want anyone to break through the public entertainment programs.

It was the same with the individual anti-fans.

– He was picked out and not randomly put in by the agency, so I am not going to curse… In the first place, it’s uncomfortable to see Gommeo winning first place by storytelling

– Moondae, don’t mess up. My baby has to come out

– I’m not interested in Gommeo’s f*cking entertainment, so I’ll mute it but they only have a group account, so I have to keep watching

– Huh? Only Park Moondae will appear on a public variety show? T-one guys, please set up more individual schedules for my kid too

Negative public opinion subsided quietly after they only said this much under the surface.

– Ah~ I hope it’s next Friday soon

Overall, this opinion was the general opinion of the entertainment community.

And now, the subject of this excitement was entering the filming set, filled with distrust.

* * *

‘That bastard is suspicious.’

Suddenly, without discussing it beforehand, he pointed out Park Moondae as a guest on a variety show?

He was the one who blew it up, but in his messages, he didn’t say a word about this variety show. It meant that he didn’t intend to tell me personally in the first place.

‘I think he’s trying to screw me.’

However, there was no way the company would be okay with calling off casting on a public Friday night entertainment show that had good ratings.

Thanks to this, I was currently approaching the filming location after saying hello to the staff.

“…”

I saw a huge wooden building in front of me.

‘It reminds me of bad memories.’

Out of all things, it had to be wood. I held back my sigh and knocked on the door.

“Is there anyone inside?”

Thump thump.

When I knocked hard on the door, the door opened slightly.

“It must be cold, come in quickly.”

“…Thank you.”

Because of this sh*t midwinter setting, I almost died from the heat trying to wear a padded jacket in the summer.

‘Since it’s the person inviting who decides on it, it must be this bastard who decided the setting.’

It didn’t matter to him because he was indoors from the beginning.

I swallowed the curse that rose up to my throat and entered the building.

Inside… It was a typical mountain cabin. It wasn’t like a pension, but it looked like a simple facility for hikers to stay for a while.

‘…Is it the time to say the lines?’

I muttered, taking off my luggage and putting it in the corner.

“I was surprised by the sudden snowstorm, but it’s fortunate that there is a mountain cabin.”

“I see. I also quickly came in after seeing the weather.”

Yes. Currently, the default setting was ‘a state on the verge of distress in a snowy mountain cabin’.

The reason for this absurd setting was obvious.

It was a feature of this program.

<Let’s Get Close First> was a program that cast a celebrity and let them spend time with the celebrity they pointed out.

However, since healing content like this was common, they added fresh elements.

An extreme situation.

The setting where the two guests were isolated to take care of their body’s safety in some extreme situations was unconditionally the default.

Of course, it wasn’t real, it was just some kind of skit. To the point that it went back and forth between gag and immersion.

For reference, the situation with the apartment where the zombie apocalypse broke out was a big hit during the pilot.

Youngrin picked out an actor from MallangDalkom and the two of them appeared together; it was quite interesting when I looked at some clips.

‘The problem is that I’m on the show.’

With a 1.8 million copies idol who I couldn’t figure out.

‘Let’s not show weakness.’

The goal was to finish filming safely and leave, as if dealing with a bad-tempered senior.

“It’s rare to go hiking in this weather, so an encounter like this is amazing. Ah, would you like some coffee?”

Cheongryeo smiled and lifted a thermos bottle. His other hand was holding an old and tacky coffee cup, perhaps the setting was he found it in the cabin.

“Thank you.”

I accepted the coffee cup offered by Cheongryeo with both hands. Americano was boiling inside.

I was about to die from the heat but I had an Americano boiling hot in my arms…

“…”

I pretended to drink it and put it down.

Fortunately, the air conditioner was tight on the inside, so it was gradually bearable even with winter clothes.

‘It’s my turn to offer something.’

I opened my mouth.

“I’ve received the coffee, so if you don’t mind, can I treat you to dinner? I brought some canned food.”

“That’s great. Um… The snowstorm is still strong. It looks like we will have to wait a long time, so we should eat well.”

“Yes.”

I wondered what this was all about as he pretended to peek out at the window that was blocked by the green screen.

‘…What’s going on?’

I did this job for the money. Let’s not think about useless things.

I approached the bag I had thrown in the corner and took out the canned food.

I didn’t pack this up, it was prepared by the production team…

A trademark caught my eye.

[Convenient Boneless Chicken Feet Rice Bowl]

“…”

Let’s pick another one. As for the chicken feet… This gag was overused.

“Thank you for the food.”

“Don’t mention it.”

The meal time just passed by with a light skit about why I started hiking.

“I’ll clean it up.”

“…No! We have to do this together.”

Are you making your hubae play in order to send someone away?

As I organized the remaining plastic and containers, I heard a loud noise from outside.

‘Clangclangbang!!’

The sound was real. I was honestly surprised.

“…!!”

“Is it thunder?”

Cheongryeo frowned and went to the cabin door to open the door slightly.

But the door didn’t open.

“…I guess that sound earlier was a landslide. It looks like it’s snowing outside.”

“I’ll call the police for now.”

I took out an old phone. And I pretended to be ‘the person who called the police, but heard that they couldn’t come today because the snow was too piled up’.

“It ends up like this. Then let’s hold out in this cabin today for now.”

“Yes, I look forward to your kind cooperation…”

“Likewise, I look forward to your kind cooperation as well.”

With this, the notified default setting was over.

From now on, we could set up the situation freely with one or two character settings in mind… was the prior explanation of the production team.

So I did some gag pretending to find the stove and crack down on the windows and sat down in the living room again.

“The stove is not working well. I don’t know what’s going to happen, so I’m going to stay up all night today.”

It was the production team’s wish to have us say absurd lies all night for the broadcast image.

‘…What should I do?’

Given the format of this program, I supposed it was time to have an honest chat ‘with a stranger.’

‘If it starts with a subordinate asking for advice, will it be suitable for the broadcast image?’

After pondering about it, I tried my luck.

“Come to think of it, how did you end up hiking today?”

“I wanted to organize my thoughts, but I only had the time today, so it ended up like this. Haha. Um, actually, I am a singer.”

“Yes?”

As if embarrassed, Cheongryeo cleared his throat and continued.

“I am from an idol group called VTIC, I don’t know if you’ve heard of it.”

Look at this hideous setting.

I gave a reaction like, ‘Of course, I’ve heard it, I’m a fan.’ and told my story.

“Me too… I debuted recently.”

“Really? You’re my junior. What a coincidence.”

“I think so too.”

It was really a situation setting where the reality was as small as a hole made by a needle.

I was about to start a serious conversation, but Cheongryeo, who was rubbing his chin, suddenly said.

“Um… We happen to have the same job, and we’re not supposed to sleep… It reminds me of a story.”

“Yes?”

“Would you like to hear it?”

Is there anyone here who would say no?

“Yes, I will listen.”

“Haha, it’s not something to listen to… It’s just small talk.”

Cheongryeo lightly tapped the wooden floor.

“Do you know an idol ghost story? I heard of this recently.”

“…A ghost story? An Idol ghost story?”

“Yes.”

…I didn’t know what kind of skit he was going for, but let’s just accept it.

“What is it about?”

“Um, as for what it is about…”

Cheongryeo chuckled lightly.

“There was an idol, but one day when they opened their eyes, they went back to the past.”

“…”

“The idol was surprised, but this time they tried hard to become a successful idol without controversy… But, what’s this? They kept dying in accidents and going back to the past!”

“…”

“So, the idol who was trapped in the past had unknowingly become a ghost. They wandered around the recording studio, and when an idol who was likely to succeed was recording, they interrupted and recorded together. ‘I could have done this… ’ they said.”

Cheongryeo crossed his arms.

“What do you think?”

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CHAPTER 92

“…”

I made eye contact with the opponent. And murmured in a small voice.

“…I think I’ll remember this every time I record.”

“Haha!”

Cheongryeo waved his hand.

“You don’t have to worry. Actually, I just made it up. I modified the story of the ghost in the recording studio.”

“…Um, I see.”

“But you know that the story of the ghost in the recording studio is real, right?”

“…!”

Cheongryeo laughed a few times and started making up nonsense, then after saying that he would go wash up, he disappeared.

“…Sigh.”

It was over.

I tried my best not to look overwhelmed.

‘That guy definitely knows.’

A bastard who knew about this damn status window or regression had looked through me using the ghost story as a smoke screen.

‘How do you know?’

I wasn’t sure. It meant he didn’t check my status directly… In that case, does it mean he deduced it based on the circumstances while knowing the background knowledge?

…No, this was also uncertain.

‘There are too many uncertainties.’

Pretending to tidy up my hair, I wiped the cold sweat from my forehead. And decided on the next move.

Soon, Cheongryeo returned.

“I’m glad I brought a rechargeable electric kettle. Mix well with cold water.”

“Ah, thank you very much.”

I received the cylindrical device from Cheongryeo.

It was an electric kettle, not a thermos.

‘No wonder the Americano was boiling.’

Admiring the production crew who made sure only cold water come out and took care of it down to unnecessary details, I quietly did my part

‘Status window.’

First of all, I checked the status window.

Judging from the trend so far, there was usually a hint of the person's personality in their characteristics and status abnormalities.

'There's no harm in checking it.'

But the moment it popped up.

An unexpected hint appeared.

[Name: Cheongryeo (Shin Jaehyun)]

This person is currently unidentifiable.

※Required condition: Check the second 'truth'

"…!"

I immediately my head turned to the bathroom.

It was to hide my agitation.

Then I slowly moved to the bathroom and closed the door.

"…"

There were no cameras in the bathroom.

"Sigh…"

But the microphone was still on. I checked the status window again, keeping my mouth shut to avoid talking nonsense.

[※Required condition: Check the second 'truth']

I didn't read it wrong.

It meant I had to take the reward ‘truth’ that I had been putting on hold to be able to check Cheongryeo’s status window.

‘Are you rushing me?’

Or maybe it was required because Cheongryeo was really connected to this situation.

‘It’s like watching game content with level restrictions.’

Either way was plausible, so I couldn’t be so sure.

‘…Restart the status abnormality with this uncertain hint?’

It was crazy. So I felt even more uncomfortable.

‘If it’s for the purpose of rushing me, It can use more extreme measures.’

What if the status window is shaking a carrot because that guy really has a clue?

“…”

Let’s decide.

‘In any case, I can’t continue living with the status abnormality.’

Strictly speaking, my speculation that status abnormality would disappear if I cleared it up like this was no different from a happy delusion.

Besides, no matter how much I delayed it, the time limit was 300 days. After that, I had to take the reward.

‘I’d rather get what I can get now.’

If I let this timing pass by, I didn’t know how Cheongryeo would turn up. I’d rather finish it when we were still investigating each other.

‘…Pop-up.’

[Successfully won first place!]

You won first place on the music show <Popular Music>!

!Time limit: Fulfilled (great success)

!Status abnormality: ‘Win first place or die’ removed!

: Check the truth ☜Click!

I slowly raised my hand and touched‘Click!’.

And like last time, my vision went black.

* * *

On the rooftop of a building where the cold wind blew.

“…”

A man was smoking a cigarette. The smoke was blown away by the chilly winter wind.

He might cough in the cold air, but the man didn’t blink an eye.

He just looked down with sharp eyes. A brilliant night view passed by. There was an on the billboard across the street.

It was a brand he once filmed for.

His group, to be exact.

‘Where did it go wrong… ’

The man looked at the colors of the flashy video and was suddenly lost in thought.

Going overseas at the wrong time? The concept that didn’t fit the trend? Members who lost their original resolution? Investors in the agency who only added useless obstacles?

“…”

And he came to a conclusion.

‘It was wrong from the beginning.’

In the first place, the composition of the members was wrong. There were too many useless members.

No, not useless, they were a hindrance.

‘If it was me, I wouldn’t have done it like that.’

He finally admitted. He’d lived a wrong life.

‘Emotions, tears. I have sold everything,’

When people stand, they want to sit, and when they sit down, they want to lie down. Personal circumstances, inevitable stories… It was just an excuse to speak and sell it at a low price.

“…”

He felt relieved after admitting it. The man chuckled and tossed the remaining burnt cigarette into the sky.

And just like that, it fell down the railing.

Rattle.

With the sound of the cigarette hitting the railing, the man fell down from the tall building into the road.

But when the man came to his senses.

“…!!”

He woke up in a small room at home.

“…What.”

The old cell phone screen he picked up reflected a boy’s face.

…It was himself before he became Cheongryeo.

* * *

“Gasp!”

I took a breath and came to my senses.

And I turned on the water right away.

Splash.

Cold water poured with a creaking sound. I immediately splashed my face with water.

“…”

It was the same as ‘Park Moondae’. This format that looked into a person’s past situation from a third-person point of view.

And… That guy was definitely Cheongryeo.

*‘F*ck.’*

This bastard also returned to the past.

If I were to roughly guess, it seemed he’d messed up his career but he came back and succeeded.

I laughed at the thought that it fit the plot of the web novel, but before that, I was angry.

‘That’s why I was blocked from checking his status window…!’

If I could check his status window, the ‘truth’ reward would have no meaning.

No, more importantly, why the hell is this a reward?

Park Moondae’s past was directly related to my situation, so it was understandable.

However, no matter what Cheongryeo did, what does it have to do with me that I have to get this ‘reward’?

‘Give me a hint about the status abnormality…!’

The rising anger only subsided after I soaked my head in cold water for quite some time. And I managed to draw a reasonable conclusion.

‘…It means I can get some hints.’

If I could get information from the person who had experienced this strange supernatural phenomenon, I would certainly understand how things worked.

In that sense, it seemed the status window gave me hints step by step as if I was playing a game.

Ring.

[‘Win an award or die’]

: If you don’t receive the Rookie of the Year award at the most prestigious domestic awards ceremony within the time limit, you will die

Remaining period: D-365

…When I saw it pulled this bullshit again, I felt like it just wanted me to suffer.

‘But it’s a little better this time.’

Unless something unusual happened, I could take care of the Rookie of the Year award.

Although that vague ‘prestigious’ standard bothered me, the candidate… Hmm, there were three. In terms of objective performance, there was no way we would lose.

It was hard to get popular these days; no matter which rookie debuted in the second half of the year, it was impossible to surpass <Idol Inc.>’s Testar.

‘Winning first place on a music show is harder.’

I calmed down and wiped the water off my face.

Then, I walked out of the bathroom holding the kettle I had received from Cheongryeo.

“I’ve used it well. Thank you very much.”

“You’re welcome, I’m glad you’ve used it well.”

I returned the kettle and sat across from Cheongryeo.

Then I took out the snacks from my backpack and handed them over.

“We’re going to stay up all night, so if you don’t mind, why don’t you eat something sweet?”

“Ah, thank you.”

Cheongryeo accepted it right away, but he just pretended to open it and didn’t eat it.

‘I don’t know if he’s monitoring or being vigilant.’

I pretended to rummage through my backpack and checked Cheongryeo’s status window again.

This time, it showed up properly.

[Name: Cheongryeo (Shin Jaehyun)]

Vocal: B+ (B+)

Dance: S+ (S+)

Visual: A+ (S-)

Talent: A (A+)

Characteristics: Judgment (A)

!Status abnormality: Remediation (inactive)

‘Are you crazy?’

What kind of high-level f*cking stat is this?

I was going to check his characteristics first, but my eyes naturally moved on their own. I almost bit my tongue.

‘But his potential isn’t infinite.’

My vague expectation that his stats would be limited to EX was wrong.

At any rate, I had to come back to my sense and see what I was originally going to check.

Let’s start with the characteristics.

[Judgment (A)]

: Valuable things are rare, and trash is everywhere.

– Human resource judgment +150%

‘He has similar talents to a businessman.’

If the ‘truth’ recollection I saw earlier was true, it might be a talent gained by recalling his life before death.

The only thing that bothered me was that he only had one characteristic.

‘He doesn’t have drawing characteristics?’

The difference between us was quite clear.

Anyway, let’s move on.

This time, it was the status abnormality.

[Remediation (inactive)]

: Let’s try again

– If you fail, you go back to the beginning.

…I got goosebumps.

And I just remembered the conversation.

– This time they tried hard to become a successful idol without controversy… But, what's this? They kept dying in accidents and going back to the past!

'The idol ghost story he was talking about earlier… Was it about him?'

Could it be that if he failed to remove '~if you die' type of status abnormalities, he would go back to the time when the status window first appeared?

It was an eerie deduction.

However, this status abnormality was 'inactive'.

That alone was a great harvest. Because it meant there was a way to disable it.

'For now, I have sorted it all out.'

A further investigation followed next.

I put down my luggage and stared at Cheongryeo again.

"Are you done checking the snacks?"

"Yes. It's nothing much."

"Haha."

You're still confused, aren't you?

As expected, this bastard didn’t know much about me. He was just figuring me out.

It meant I had the upper hand in terms of information, so this time it was my turn to ask.

Catch him off guard.

“Um… Sunbae-nim, is it okay if I ask for advice?”

“Of course. I don’t know if I can give you any advice, but… Do you have any concerns?”

“Yes, actually… Sunbae-nim, how did you start with other sunbae-nims in your group?”

“…Um, How did I start?”

I brought out my cold coffee and took a slow sip on purpose. And I continued slowly.

“Since our team’s formation process was unique… I think we definitely have a lot in common, but I wonder what the other groups are like.”

“…Is that so?”

“Yes. How did the VTIC sunbae-nims debut together?”

“…”

In the ‘truth’ recollection, this guy definitely picked ‘members’ as the fundamental cause of VTIC’s failure.

‘This bastard definitely changed the members in the middle.’

I didn’t know how a trainee did it, but this guess was almost certain.

Currently, VTIC was strong and living well as a top tier without major controversy.

“Um, that’s an interesting question.”

Cheongryeo smiled and picked up the snack I gave him.

Chomp. With that sound, the nuts were chewed and disappeared. I waited silently for an answer with a serious face.

Come on, get agitated.

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CHAPTER 93

Cheongnyeo started to blur his words from the beginning.

“Um, Where should I start…”

“I’ll listen.”

I knelt down on purpose. It was because I had to appear as a rookie idol seeking advice from the top senior on this broadcast.

Cheongryeo smiled soullessly and told me to sit comfortably a few times, and when he confirmed that the conversation wasn’t going as he wished, he began to answer.

“We met as a group at our agency, and we got close quickly because everyone had good personalities.”

The standard answer continued, saying that everyone worked hard even when they debuted.

It was obvious, but it was also a virtue that people expected from idols.

Well, I couldn’t let him get away with it like this.

“I’m very attached to Testar members right now, and Cheongryeo sunbae-nim also gets along well with the sunbae-nims on the same team from the beginning.”

I took a sip of the coffee I had left. I got to the part where the coffee had already sunk in, so the taste was so strong that it kept my mind awake.

“Strangers who don’t know anything about each other met as a team, and everyone got along well without fighting. It’s really amazing and wonderful.”

“…”

“I’m sure you are all good people, but Cheongryeo sunbae-nim must have played a big role as a leader. I really look up to you.”

A proper flattery befitting of a rookie.

I didn’t cross the line that would make me look like I was beating down other members.

But its meaning would have been roughly conveyed to Cheongryeo.

‘You did everything you could to select only the ones that fit your taste and formed a team with them. I know that.’

…Sure enough, Cheongryeo was staring this way.

“Is that so?”

“Yes.”

“I’m embarrassed. It wasn’t like that.”

“No, you’re amazing.”

“Okay, thank you.”

Then, you should have figured out the situation now.

“It’s my first time talking about it in a place like this, so I didn’t know how it was.”

“It was a great help. Thank you.”

“…You’re welcome.”

With this, he must have recognized which side was missing out. I ended the conversation at that point.

“Now then, shall we make ourselves comfortable?”

“Yes. Thank you.”

After that, the mountain cabin distress skit continued.

Continuous landslides and ruined back rooms.

And even the eerie news from the radio found in the warehouse.

Well, it seemed I took care of it well because I was immersed in it. I would have to watch it live later.

So without incident, the filming was finished the next morning.

* * *

As soon as the filming was over, it started to rain. It was the rainy season.

“Thank you for your hard work~”

I nodded and greeted the people around me, and at the recommendation of the production team, I took out my smartphone.

And I made a video call.

Tut-tut-tut- Click!

Before long, a familiar face appeared on the screen… It was Keun Sejin.

‘I called Ryu Chungwoo, but why are you coming out first?’

[Heol, Park Moondae.]

[Is it Moondae hyung calling?]

I heard a thud, and soon the screen was filled with Testar.

‘It’s worthwhile telling everyone to come out together if I call anyone.’

The production team had said beforehand that it would be nice if Testar would also come out as an outsider even if the story was over

Originally, I was going to put it in the main shoot, but it was impossible due to the timing, so I thought it would probably go into the ending as some kind of post-credit-scene.

[A-Are you done filming?]

“Yeah, I’m leaving now.”

[Be careful on your way.]

[T-That’s right. B-Be careful…]

[Buy some snacks on the way~]

“…”

It was raining, but I was listening to all kinds of heartfelt requests. I tried to ignore it, but I answered Keun Sejin as gently as possible, mindful of the camera.

“Buy it yourself. Go inside and have some.”

[Oh~ Moondae is good at talking back? Alright!]

They were also conscious of the camera, so they laughed lightly and moved on. I had a few more trivial small talks and soon ended the video call.

I received a text message from the manager saying that his arrival was delayed a little due to the sudden heavy rain.

Oh, by the way, he was a new manager who finally came in a few days ago. He was younger than my original age.

“Moondae-ssi, aren’t you leaving?”

“Ah, sunbae-nim.”

I bowed my head to Cheongryeo, who was talking to me. I could feel a few staff looking at me sideways.

“I’m waiting because my manager said he will be late.”

“I guess it’s because it’s raining. Then you’ll be late for lunch, so why don’t we go inside and get a meal?

“That’s right, Moondae-ssi. Eat first before you go home. We’re supposed to have a company dinner, but we’re not done cleaning up because of the rain so we can’t.”

A writer passing by intervened to help.

He praised Park Moondae for his cuts, so it seemed Park Moondae had made a pretty good impression on him.

Thanks to that, he made things easier.

“Then I’ll be grateful.”

“Alright.”

Cheongryeo brought out his car, and I explained the situation to the manager and quickly got permission. There was no afternoon schedule anyway.

‘I’ll go home and sleep as soon as this is over.’

In the midst of the pleasant imagination, Cheongryeo drove the car back.

‘If you’re in your seventh year, you deserve to get your own car.’

“Get in.”

“Thank you.”

I got in the front seat right away. Thud, I closed the door and fastened my seat belt, and the car started right away.

Cheongryeo didn’t wait any longer.

“I don’t like wasting time. Shall we get straight to the point instead of uselessly sizing up each other?”

“…”

“What year are you from?”

“Sunbae-nim first.”

“Haha.”

Cheongryeo stopped laughing.

…He seemed a little psychotic?

‘He suddenly laughed and used informal speech?’

Just in case, I should keep checking to make sure he didn’t forget to keep his eyes forward. I started paying attention to both conversation and the view.

At any rate, this was no different from admitting with my own mouth.

“I’m already past that point. It’s not very useful. Um, I thought I’d want to hear a little bit about the future.”

“I don’t have much to say either.”

“What?”

“I was a civil exam student.”

“…”

Cheongryeo didn’t answer as if he was speechless and soon sighed as if drained by the wind.

Then, as if to lower the level of tension a little, he spoke in a slightly relaxed voice.

“It’s ridiculous. A civil exam student, what kind of idol is that…”

“If I don’t become an idol, I will die.”

“Oh, you’ve known that much already?”

‘…?’

I felt a slight sense of incongruity.

“When did you find out, sunbae-nim?”

“I tried to send someone away but I failed, so I died and went back.”

“…Where did you send him away?”

“To his own country. After all, he’s the kind of guy who’s going to set up a factory after doing it for three years.”

Cheongryeo smiled and lightly tapped the steering wheel.

‘I’d rather be the person driving.’

The problem was that Park Moondae didn’t have a license. There was no other situation where I could take a break.

…Anyway, I definitely felt it in the conversation just now.

‘He can’t see the status window.’

Seeing that he realized the ‘death status abnormality’ only after he died, this guy didn’t have the guide called a status window.

‘That’s why he couldn’t fill in the three characteristics.’

He literally started from scratch.

He had an advantage over me in that he was an idol from the beginning and went back to his own body.

‘At what time did he die? I think he would have died without making a debut at the audition.’

If I lied here for no reason, my words would start to get twisted. If this guy noticed and started mixing in lies, I would be in trouble too.

Let’s tell the truth.

“I haven’t died yet.”

“…Really? Then how did you know?”

“I just know. If I don’t make an achievement within the deadline, I will die.”

“…”

Cheongryeo looked ahead without saying a word and then murmured softly.

“I’m jealous.”

“…”

I only moved my eyes to glance at the rearview mirror but I could see Cheongryeo’s eyes staring at me.

…Frankly, it was downright creepy.

“Now would be the perfect time. You must feel like you’re the main character.”

“…I might die every time the deadline returns.”

“…Ah, right. There will be a difference in standpoint… Um.”

Cheongryeo suddenly continued in a lighter tone.

“I think it’s kind of a penalty.”

“What?”

“If you fail to do something that you feel like you should do, you die. Isn’t it bearable? Going back in time.”

“…”

I didn’t have the slightest idea.

Isn’t this just crazy? I think he’s gone crazy trying to rationalize the situation because of his defense mechanism.

However, Cheongryeo unexpectedly gave a reason that made sense. It was a very surprising reason.

“I made a calculation… It basically lasted for as much as the years you returned. So.”

“…!”

It meant that there was an end to the status abnormality.

‘So, that’s why his status abnormality was inactivated.’

Let’s assume that this statement was correct. So I’d gone back three years…

‘Four. Two of them have already been completed.’

There was a glimmer of hope.

…Of course, how much I could trust this guy was another matter. But I was satisfied with having someone to dig out from, and next, let’s ask what had been bothering me.

“By the way, how did you know I had returned to the past?”

“…Ah, I just know?”

“…”

He was copying my words on purpose. It meant I should come clean first.

I clicked my tongue inwardly.

‘But I can’t talk about the status window right now.’

This guy was usually fine, but he seemed to lose his mind when it came to this supernatural situation.

No more provoking him today.

“At any rate, it was fun to meet hubae-nim in many respects. It was a useful experience.”

“Yes, sunbae-nim. Thank you.”

“If you have any questions, please contact me.”

“Thank you.”

After that, I ate quietly at a proper Korean restaurant and returned to the dorm.

‘…Finally.’

I stayed up all night fighting a battle of wits and I was terribly tired.

When I opened the front door and went in, people without afternoon schedules popped out and waved their hands.

“Moondae has arrived~”

“How was it, was the variety show alright?”

“Y-You’ve worked hard!”

“…Oh, it was fine, thank you.”

Wow, good to see you guys.

It was often said that you would get attached if you see their faces often, but it seemed I had gotten comfortable because we were together every day.

I grabbed Keun Sejin who was brushing his teeth and asked.

“Any snacks?”

“Oho, did you believe me, Moondae?”

Of course not.

But for some reason, I got into the mood and said it this once. Of course, the results were as expected.

But surprisingly, Keun Sejin pointed to the refrigerator.

“Check them and pick two things you want to eat. I bought them at a convenience store.”

“…”

My expectations… were off the mark.

I shrugged.

“Thanks.”

“Don’t mention it. It’s supposed to be three per person, but since you got a solo variety show, your snacks get deducted.”

“…”

“Hahaha! It’s a joke~ A joke! It’s supposed to be two per person.”

This guy was crossing the line these days.

At that moment, the smartphone rang.

Ring.

[VTIC Cheongryeo sunbae-nim: Call me if you feel like dying ^^]

“…”

Suddenly, I didn’t mind Keun Sejin’s behavior.

‘First of all, he’s much better than this guy.’

[Yes, I understand. Thank you.]

After replying roughly, I washed up and left my snacks behind, and then immediately went straight to bed.

“You’re here.”

“Yes. Did anything happen?”

“No… You’re going to sleep?”

“Yes, I stayed up all night. Can I close the curtains?”

“Yes.”

After a brief conversation with Lee Sejin, I closed the blackout curtains with his permission and took a nap.

Because I had to do some monitoring in the evening.

[Testar’s Living Together TEST! Episode 6]

The reality travel episode came out today.

OceanofPDF.com

CHAPTER 94

“You’re awake?”

“Did you sleep well?”

“Yeah, it was refreshing.”

I rarely said it out loud. After a good nap and a bath, I really felt good.

“Now, everyone, look here and smile~”

Keun Sejin caught the guys sneakily gathering in the living room and took a picture.

“For upload?”

“Hn.”

I didn’t meddle because I thought I could revise it later. Instead, I took out my smartphone to monitor real-time responses.

‘…It’s slow.’

I picked up the lowest price among the low-end types and it was slowly getting worse, perhaps because the daily usage time was too long.

Well, I didn’t have money to change it now, so let’s not think about it anymore.

Anyway, the SNS timeline was crowded with people waiting for the main broadcast.

“Ah, it’s starting.”

“Cha Eugene! The reality show is here!”

“Yes!”

The broadcast started when Cha Eugene ran out of the kitchen with snacks.

The first thing that came out… It was the excited Testar preparing for departure.

[Ryu Chungwoo: Can I bring this much?]

[Cha Eugene: I like traveling~]

[Keun Sejin: We’ll finish the trip and return home safely!]

[A little later…]

Then a cut of a skydiving airplane leisurely flying appeared.

The camera slid down to reveal Testar, who was standing blankly in some countryside, carrying their luggage.

[PD Jung: You see that light airplane up there?]

[Testar:…?]

[PD Jung: You’re going to get in there and jump off.]

[Testar: (Shocked)]

A huge white caption floated above Testar who was bewildered.

[Why is this happening?]

Shortly after, the screen showed the dorm.

[Testar’s dorm a few days ago]

Above the living room floor with balloons, a huge note with the words ‘Special! Testar’s 1st Place Celebration Trip’ received a spotlight CG.

And a caption was added.

[※The cause of this situation (Spoiler)]

After that… What Testar went through came out without much editing.

[Cha Eugene: A trip!]

It meant that the figure of us getting excited about the trip, spinning the roulette, and being taken aback by the extreme travel came out humorously well-edited.

Of course, the finishing touch came from noticing the manipulation of the roulette wheel.

[Tada! (Again) Extreme travel]

[Tada! (Again) (Again) Extreme travel]

[Testar: ?!]

An interview was attached.

[Park Moondae (Genius puppy): When the roulette stopped, it bounced once. It looked unnatural.]

[Park Moondae (Cheated puppy): But my guess was really correct… (Speechless)]

[Lee Sejin (A in Idol Inc): Even Idol Inc never did such manipulation…!]

-

– Lee Sejin’s words are so funny. He said even Idol Inc never did such manipulation

┗I’m sure he’s being serious

– The only thing that’s been heartwarming so far was the driving in the travel episode

– No, Moondae’s ability is really extreme. He’s really good at what he’s good at and really bad at what he’s bad at

┗Examples of the things he’s bad at: horror, drawing

┗Hey, we’ll see one of that two today^^

┗I’m looking forward to the haunted house so much that I’m going crazy

“…”

Why… are you looking forward to something I am bad at?

Anyway, Testar on the screen received meticulous skydiving training and boarded the light airplane.

[Testar: (Focused)]

During this process, the attitude of the members drew quite a bit of attention.

– Raebin is chanting prayers

┗ Kim Rabbit: This is… completely safe… I’m safe…

– Seon Ahyeon is surprisingly strong-willed, he doesn’t even blink an eye
I don’t understand those who are scared, but I have to comfort them <- This point is really funny

– Ha, but everyone is trying too hard for this… Guys, if you think it’s hard, you can mess around, this isn’t survival

┗Ah… My heart suddenly hurts…

– Ryu Chungwoo running is so cool, even the instructor is amazed

I just got on and ran, so there was nothing special about the portion of my preparation.

Just a caption and a format when landing… I got one.

[Puppy landing]

And jumping… A black Welsh corgi was inserted as a translucent CG.

“Hahahaha!!”

“Puppy! Puppy!”

“…Stop it.”

Stop hitting the sofa, too.

‘…The reality production guys, when there’s nothing to edit, they deal with it using puppies.’

Where the hell did you get that kind of video material from?

Anyway, fans laughed and enjoyed it. But given the occasional responses mentioning Tibetan foxes… Keun Sejin’s interview seemed to last for a long time.

[Keun Sejin: It feels like flying in the sky? Haha, it’s not an easy experience. I liked it.]

[Cha Eugene: I want to do it again!]

[Kim Raebin: When I jumped down, I felt a refreshing sense of freedom.]

On the screen, interviews with warm words were inserted to deal with the shock of ‘abrupt skydiving’.

And next…

[PD Jung: Everyone, please divide into groups to join the ‘Invitation to the Haunted House’!]

It was the extreme horror experience.

[Keun Sejin: We…! We have bad memories of making groups…!]

[Kim Raebin: We will enter together!]

Fans were both saddened and delighted by Testar’s words that weren’t going to work.

– Bad memories adlib

– Idol Inc PTSD here?

– Is it that scary

– Ah, I’ve been waiting for this, guys, hurry up and go in (popcorn)

And as they wished… The figure of Testar exploring the haunted house was broadcasted.

But somehow… Our portion was the biggest.

‘…It must be because there are three of us.’

If I didn’t think like that, I wouldn’t be able to see it out of embarrassment.

[Keun Sejin: Aarrgh!]

[Cha Eugene: Uaaaa!]]

[Park Moondae: (Fainted)]

Fainted?

‘I was moving just fine, why do you put captions like that?’

Looking at the screen, Keun Sejin and Cha Eugene clapped and laughed.

“Right! I thought you really fainted!”

“Your soul left your body!”

…Cha Eugene also knew advanced words like soul.

“…It wasn’t like that.”

“Oh, is that so?”

Keun Sejin grinned.

“Then tell me the one thing said when you were being chased.”

“…”

Was there… something said?

“You don’t remember, right? You don’t know, right? It’s because you fainted!”

Keun Sejin chuckled, saying that we should thank him for forming the group.

“Hey, look over there. It’s coming out now!”

“…”

When I turned my head, I saw an employee running down the hallway on the screen.

…Sure enough, there was a sound of screaming.

[*Bbbirrrrrrrddd*…!]

“See?”

Keun Sejin asked triumphantly.

But right after that, Cha Eugene and Keun Sejin started screaming louder on both sides of the screen.

[Aaaaaaa!!]

[※The volume is adjusted.]

“…”

It was because of these guys.

In the meantime, the broadcasting team collected Keun Sejin’s quiet activities, edited them with emphasis, and broadcasted them.

[Doing everything while being scared]

[Oh? He found it?]

[Keunse who takes care of his team members]

[Found it alone]

– Hey, Keun Sejin is kind of cool?

– Did you see him change direction as soon as he found it?

– What’s this, he’s just enjoying the fear He’s really good at exploring

– He is the competence itself

– Moondae is completely frozen, so cute

– Our puppy can’t even bark, he’s so gentle

“…”

When I turned my head, Keun Sejin was smiling broadly.

“Wow, Keun Sejin shortened the escape time? As expected, he was taking care of Moondae!”

It must be hard have been for him, but I wish I could hit that guy’s mouth at least once.

* * *

‘Invitation to the Haunted House’ ended by telling a little bit of its backstory on the broadcast.

[The identity of the photos taken by Testar is…?]

The storyline, which combined human sacrifice with the 20th-century western classic haunted house, was quite creepy.

“Ah, that’s why there was an altar there.”

“…It’s kind of sad.”

“…”

People had different sensitivities, so let’s move on.

Anyway, the first part of the trip ended with the scene of eating a whole grilled pig.

Taking care of the staff’s share in this kind of cut was now almost a national rule, so the scene came out well.

– It’s nice to see you guys eating well

– Wow, the pig disappeared in a snap

– Are they not managing themselves? They always eat meat

└What are you talking about? All of Testar members are too thin

└Manage your own body

– Please do a mukbang on the W app

Hmm, that last comment was worth considering.

‘The reality show will end next week.’

Episode 7 was actually the end, and episode 8 seemed to be a special highlights compilation with captions like director’s cuts.

In fact, considering that most idol reality shows were finished within 4 episodes, this was already lengthened to a mind-blowing level.

In addition to the momentum when <Idol Inc> had just finished its final episode, a huge drama was coming out on another cable at the same time slot so Tnet's scheduling was empty.

'It's almost longer than the activity period.'

The music show was also the last this week. The debut album activity could be seen as complete.

'Should I do a W live to commemorate the end of the activity?'

I went back to my bedroom and logged into Testar's account on the W app to check.

And I was a little surprised. The last live was just a few hours ago.

[Test]

But the length of the video was 1 minute and 2 seconds.

'…One minute?'

I didn't know what the hell happened.

Considering that I couldn't hear anything, it wasn't an accident, but I didn't know what was going on.

'Who is it?'

First of all, the most likely candidate was Keun Sejin. But there was no way that guy only did it for one minute.

I clicked on the black thumbnail.

With some white noise, a dark screen was printed out.

And after a while.

Suddenly, the screen was filled with forearms.

[Ah…, l-like this…]

[Huh?]

[…Ugh!]

It was the end of the video.

‘It’s Seon Ahyeon.’

It seemed he had touched something wrong and turned on the actual live while practicing.

Looking at the comments, everyone was crying because it was so cute. There were quite a few people who made happy guesses that he was rearranging and would play it at night.

It was just a little strange.

‘Um, with his personality, I think he would have posted a long apology on SNS.’

When I accessed Testa’s SNS account several times today, I didn’t see any trace of it.

‘I was going to do W live anyway, so I’ll have to talk about it.’

It was also easier to proceed with one or three people together than do it alone.

I would be less burdened if a motivated guy joined.

I went to the next room and knocked on the door.

“Can I come in?”

“…Y-Yeah!”

The door opened immediately. Kim Raebin was still in the living room and Seon Ahyeon was alone in the room.

“W-What is it…?”

But why are you walking on eggshells?

I used to be like that too, but the time for this had already passed.

‘Come to think of it, I don’t think I’ve heard Seon Ahyeon saying something today.’

He’d become quite talkative lately.

Now, his attitude and tone had returned back to the beginning of <Idol Inc.>.

“What’s going on with you?”

“N-No.”

Seon Ahyeon stubbornly denied it. Huh.

“You’re breaking out in a cold sweat right now.”

“…!!”

“If you don’t want to tell me, tell Chungwoo hyung or the manager hyung.”

“W-Wait.”

Seon Ahyeon struggled to open his mouth, still breaking out in a cold sweat.

“I-I… m-made a mistake.”

“W live?”

“Y-You saw…”

“Yeah. You accidentally turned it on. But well… It’s not a problem.”

Everyone in the comments said that they enjoyed it, but Seon Ahyeon shook his head heavily.

“T-That… I-I turned it on, it wasn’t an accident.”

“…?”

Seon Ahyeon swallowed.

“I-I was going to turn it on, but then I turned it off.”

“…”

“I-I was too s-scared…”

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CHAPTER 95

I summarized Seon Ahyeon's difficult explanation.

"So… You turned it on to say hello, but you suddenly got scared and turned it off."

"…Y-Yes."

"Um."

Seon Ahyeon lowered his head as if he had become a sinner. It was kind of funny that we sat on the floor in front of the door and did this.

"What were you scared of?"

"P-People… I-I don't think they would like it."

"They wouldn't watch it if they didn't like it."

"…T-They cursed."

"Hmm, did you read the real-time comments?"

Seon Ahyeon nodded vigorously.

'I guess another crazy bastard went in as soon as the notification came in and started talking bullshit.'

I didn't know why there were so many people who want to change others' lives by hurting them.

‘It’s frustrating.’

Anyway, Seon Ahyeon definitely had seen a ridiculous level of verbal abuse when he appeared in <Idol Inc.>

He had endured it well at that time, but what broke out this time was probably triggered by the fan signing event.

‘It seems the comments coming up in real-time also had an impact.’

It sounded as though he’d heard it right in front of his face.

I said, rubbing my shoulders.

“Even if you don’t have this job… You can’t only meet people who like you. Someone will hate you. And there are also guys who just enjoy cursing at others.”

“…”

“Of course, it’s not right. It can be scary, but… If you’re scared enough to quit, I think it’s better to get some help.”

“…!”

“Wouldn’t it be better to get counseling now? We are now in the final stages of our activity.”

“I-It’s fine.”

Why are you so stubborn?

I narrowed my eyes.

“I think you just don’t want to get counseling.”

“…I-It didn’t work.”

Seon Ahyeon closed his eyes tightly.

“I-In the past… This s-stuttering, I fixed it… I-It’s like this again, so that’s why.”

“…”

“I-It’s no use.”

Seon Ahyeon lowered his head.

“I-I have to keep living like this…”

“…?”

What kind of extreme nonsense is this?

“That’s just… Didn’t you just meet a quack?”

“…! Q-Quack…”

“Besides I didn’t mean that you have to fix the stuttering, I was saying it would be better if you worry less.”

“…”

“If you don’t believe me, let’s call the other kids and vote.”

“…?!”

Fortunately, there was no trauma related to this so the survey was conducted under Seon Ahyeon’s dazed consent.

First, Ryu Chungwoo.

“I can’t speak rashly, but… Whatever your job is, it’s better to continue rehabilitation. Don’t give up until you come to a conclusion. Think about it carefully”

“…Y-Yes.”

Next up was Keun Sejin and Kim Raebin. They were reading the fan song’s comments in the living room.

“Heol, you should definitely see another doctor. If you tell the company, they’ll probably introduce you to a famous doctor. There are many people who have worked for other agencies.”

“I don’t think you can generalize from a single case you’ve experienced before. I think you need to compare and analyze at least five cases to get reliability.”

“I-I-Is that so…”

Cha Eugene, who was in the kitchen, didn’t understand the word quack. After explaining the meaning, I asked t again.

“Throw away the quack! Meet a new doctor!”

“…”

Somehow it was like the summary of a soap opera, but it was clear and concise.

Lastly… I asked Lee Sejin, who was lying in bed.

An unexpectedly serious answer came back.

“…Every doctor is different. There are people who want to talk and get paid… There are good people.”

“Y-Yes.”

“If they don’t suit you, it’s better to change them quickly… I haven’t received one for a long time either.”

And after hesitating, Lee Sejin added quietly.

“…Do your best.”

“-!! Y-Yes!”

It was an unexpected fire support.

Now then, it was the end of the investigation. I crossed my arms and asked again.

“What do you think?”

Perhaps his heart was moved, Seon Ahyeon agonized over it.

And soon, he clenched his fists and said.

“…T-Then… W-When the activity is over, I’ll tell you right away.”

“You will? Alright.”

“…Y-Yes!”

“Tell your parents.”

“Huh?!”

Then again, when the schedule came up, it was good to postpone it.

I sat down and waited until Seon Ahyeon contacted his parents and told them about the counseling plan.

Seon Ahyeon had to say it himself, so he eventually sent a text message while sweating, and his parents replied in an instant.

Thus, Seon Ahyeon’s counseling schedule was successfully set.

“Well done.”

“H-Huh…”

His dumbfounded expression was asking what the hell had happened. I patted his back and returned to my room.

And that evening, I received a sudden thank-you call from Seon Ahyeon’s parents.

Apparently, Seon Ahyeon said that I persuaded him.

‘…Do you have to?’

It was a bit embarrassing.

– Thank you. We… Um, there are areas that we can’t meddle in…

Perhaps they were choked up, and after hearing the sound of them clearing up their throats a few times, the words of appreciation continued again.

“No, I just brought it up to him.”

– Even so.

…From what I heard after that, it seemed Seon Ahyeon had heard a few abusive remarks stating that he would continue to live like that immediately after his relapse.

I could bet my money that it must have been the school. Although I didn’t have much.

‘As expected, peer relationships were the problem… ’

Anyway, I ended the phone call with Seon Ahyeon’s parents with proper courtesy.

Really, I had gone through all sorts of things.

I threw my arms over the railing of the veranda where I came out to talk on the phone quietly and I could feel the summer breeze.

‘…Tired, cold.’

That was how the group life ended after a long time.

* * *

The last music show ended well without any major problems.

“Everyone likes short pants.”

“I-It’s easy to move around, so it’s nice.”

I also liked it because it was cool.

Keun Sejin who had a kneeling move at the end might have a different idea.

[Hello, Loviewer.

It’s me, Moondae. (puppy emoticon)

This is today’s outfit. (photo) (photo)]

After uploading the last group photo on SNS, I really felt like the first activity was over.

“We’re on vacation starting tomorrow.”

“I am excited~”

“I can go down after a long time.”

At Ryu Chungwoo’s words, everyone became excited.

Yes. The agency gave us a vacation as rumored.

Exactly four days.

‘For the guys living in the countryside, they’ll be happy to go down, eat, and rest.’

Still, think about where this is. It seemed there were a lot of guys who didn’t give it their all while preparing for the music show and the next album.

And as soon as they finished filming the commercial that evening, Testar skipped meals and arrived at the dorm, and then they went home one by one with the luggage they had already prepared.

“Then I’ll see you all in a few days~”

“See you!”

“See you in good health.”

“B-Bye…”

In the midst of this, Seon Ahyeon disappeared with a squeak, perhaps he was extremely nervous about going to the counseling.

Thud. Screech.

The front door was closed.

Like this, I was left alone in the dorm.

‘…It’s a piece of cake.’

Thinking of spending four days quietly in this spacious place alone, I already felt full of energy.

I let out a long sigh of relief and lay down on the sofa.

‘I’ll lie down for a while, then get up and eat… I’ll have to do a detailed monitoring that I have been pushing back… ’

…As I thought of this, I fell into a deep sleep.

And that evening.

I woke up in the living room and realized that something was wrong.

My body didn’t move.

It was the symptoms that I experienced after the first filming of <Idol Inc.>.

It meant I was suffering extreme fatigue.

‘…I’m dying.’

It even got worse. My brain seemed to be tearing apart.

At first, I tried to do something but soon realized that I wasn’t in a situation to do so.

‘How is it so difficult to watch TV?’

With a heavy hand, I turned off the TV where the WeTube screen was playing.

I was going to monitor the trailer for episode 1 of <Let’s Get Close First> taken with Cheongryeo, but I didn’t know what I saw. I had a throbbing headache.

‘…Let’s check my fever.’

Beep.

[38.8°C]

It was driving me crazy.

In the container where I found the thermometer, I rummaged through it and found painkillers. And I chewed it at once.

It tasted awful. But after a while, the pain subsided a little.

More productive thinking became possible.

‘…The manager is taking a break, too.’

It wasn’t serious enough to contact the company for now. It was just the tension in my body was released and the problems accumulated from overwork just exploded.

‘For now… should I rest during the vacation?’

It was the same as taking a break anyway, but taking a break because I was sick wasn’t very enjoyable. Unfortunately, it couldn’t be helped.

‘Let’s make porridge first while I still have the energy.’

I cooked white porridge with a bowl of instant rice, and after a few drinks, I lay down on the bed.

And while I was still feeling the effect of the medicine, I started monitoring.

‘First of all… From the reaction to the stage.’

The personal fancams of the comeback stage posted on Music Night had already accumulated quite a number of views.

It seemed there was a subtle competition between individual fans.

[(MBomb fancam) Testar(TeSTAR) Moondae *MoonDae* Magical Boy / 1.12 million]

‘…I got over a million views, too.’

It was worthwhile to raise the dance stat. I smiled faintly and clicked on the video.

– Now, go watch our genius puppy who can dance well… Let’s all watch Moon Puppy…

– Are you practicing in your sleep, Moondae? I’m worried that he’s not sleeping like he did during Idol Inc. You have to rest well and eat well

– Wow, it looks so good. Is he the first-place winner?

– Each movement has some details of each dance member… What kind of practice did you do, Moon Puppy…

It just developed naturally because we did it all together. Because I didn’t have the basic skills.

‘Still, I feel good.’

This kind of taste was like uncaring about the work-life balance and having a life ruined by work.

Hmm, there were quite a few English comments, but I couldn’t read them because my head wasn’t working well. I just moved on for now.

I did this regularly, but… I couldn’t do it often these days because there were a lot of other things to do.

Let’s search ‘Park Moondae’ on SNS.

“…”

Like last time, videos, photos, and fan art poured out.

To be honest, I didn’t really realize that so many people were interested in me.

But it was fun to look into them one by one. I slowly lowered the timeline to see what they were gossiping about.

Then I discovered some odd things.

Park Moondae Testar Moondae Idol Inc

Park Moondae, please do blonde hair again. Black f*cking hair doesn’t look good on you. Please, blonde hair! Why did you dye your hair and come back to black Your hair will grow black if you leave it alone. Please dye it blonde

“…”

The wish was strongly penetrated through the screen.

Below that, there were some people busily fighting against people who stopped them from doing this.

“Oh my God.”

All my laughs came pouring out. For the next album, I should get a vote and change my hair color.

“Next…”

Did I just say it with my mouth?

I blinked and looked at the smartphone screen. It looked a little blurry…

My head hurt. It seemed the effect of the medicine had run out.

*‘F*ck.’*

This was really difficult.

I fell into bed in a daze. Whatever. I’d get better after a nap…

My thoughts stopped there.

* * *

My body felt heavy. It felt like I was paralyzed in my sleep.

…I heard a voice.

“…dae? Hey! Park Moondae!”

“…!”

In an instant, my mind returned.

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CHAPTER 96

Through my blurry vision, I saw a familiar face.

“…Keun Sejin?”

“You seem to have a fever.”

I wasn’t sure, but Keun Sejin looked like he was freaking out.

I cleared my throat a few times before answering.

“…Cough, uh. I took my medicine.”

“It’s not just about taking medicine… Hey, go to the hospital. Do you want me to call the agency?”

“…It’s not a serious illness… It’s fine. It’s the fatigue.”

Keun Sejin clicked his tongue.

“You can get better quickly, so what are you suffering for? Just take a shot. Get a lot of prescription pills.”

“…”

It was troublesome, but honestly, it was a bit tempting.

‘The agency can do that much.’

Still, it was an affiliate of a large company, so there was an expectation that they would deal with industrial hazards of this level.

Then I realized the current situation.

“Ah… Manager hyung is taking a break today.”

“You can call a taxi. Just dress casually.”

“…”

Taxis were in the options.

I watched Keun Sejin finish the phone call and managed to speak out my rational doubts.

“But why are you here?”

“I was stopping by on my way to the agency because I needed to get something. It’s near my house.”

You have something to get from the agency?

“What is it that you get?”

“Is that important now? That’s enough, change your clothes. The taxi will come soon.”

“…Yeah.”

I slowly got up, threw off my sweaty shirt, and put on an ordinary hoodie. It was chilly, so I didn’t feel hot.

“Do you need help?”

“I am already done.”

I could just go ahead like this. If I just wore a mask to cover my face…

“Come on, wear this.”

“…”

He noticed it like a ghost. I wore the mask and acknowledged it obediently.

“Thank you.”

“If you understand, be nice to me.”

Keun Sejin shook his head and checked his smartphone.

“Ah, it says the taxi is nearby. Let’s go down.”

“Yeah. Can it goes to the front door?”

“I called it over there. Follow me.”

“…?”

Looking at him, it felt like he was going to go with me instead of just seeing me off.

“I’ll just go by myself.”

“Imagine what kind of article will come out if you collapse while going out alone.”

“…”

I accepted defeat.

“Let’s go.”

“Yes.”

I shut my mouth, followed Keun Sejin down, and took a taxi.

As I endured motion sickness with flickering consciousness, I arrived at the hospital shortly after.

* * *

“It’s much better, right?”

“Yes.”

I readily agreed. I didn’t know what the hell was in the shot, but after receiving two packs of different colors, my condition improved dramatically.

‘It’s just tolerable flu.’

It was a big hospital, and due to its location, it ended quietly even if some celebrities came.

“You can go eat and take medicine. Kya, where can you get another friend like me.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“…Don’t mention it.”

Keon Sejin shrugged his shoulders and opened the front door of the dorm.

Then a pile of boxes appeared in front of me.

“…!”

It wasn’t just delivery boxes. These boxes of different sizes, wrapped in ivory wrapping papers with dark green ribbons…

“Ah, they’ve already moved it.”

“…”

I quietly asked Keun Sejin who seemed nonchalant.

“…Is it your birthday?”

“Huh? Ah, Moondae must have looked it up while searching~”

Keun Sejin smiled with a wink.

“That’s right, it’s the day after my birthday. August 1st.”

What he had to get from the agency must have been that pile of presents.

‘…I thought you were the type who would make a fuss a week before your birthday.’

I didn’t know he wouldn’t say a word.

In fact, if I hadn’t remembered what I saw on SNS a few days ago, I almost passed by that pile of presents thinking it was to support the debut commemoration.

At any rate, the birthday guy was unconcerned.

“Because my birthday passed in the middle of the vacation~ I was going to take a proof shot first. It’s nice to see this right away on the actual day.”

“That’s true, and… First of all, congratulations.”

“Alright~ Send me touching congratulatory messages and gifticons on my birthday. I’ll be satisfied with chicken.”

I smiled.

“…You paid for the chicken today.”

“-! Moondae, If you listen to this, you can get two.”

“What?”

Keun Sejin grinned, then walked into the kitchen and lifted a pot.

“This is galbi-jjim[1]Galbi-jjim = braised short ribs…”

“…Galbi?”

Where did it suddenly come from?

“You know~ I’m worried about my friend who’s going to stay alone at the dorm. So I take this away from my birthday presents!”

“…!!”

“Just… Isn’t it touching? Keun Sejin brought galbi for his teammates while on vacation… Hah, tell this moving story wherever you go.”

“…”

“Are you speechless because you’re grateful? It’s okay. It can happen.”

Keun Sejin waved his hand and headed for the front door.

“I’m going back, so take good care of your health during vacation. Make sure to heat up the galbi-jjim.”

“…Do you want me to take a proof shot of the presents?”

“Haha, that’s enough. You’re still sick. I already took a picture at the agency.”

Keun Sejin disappeared leaving a piece of advice, ‘If you get sick again, go to the hospital again’.

“…”

‘I’ve been through all kinds of things.’

This one was quite new because I hadn’t been with anyone when I was sick and only the annoying things had increased.

‘It’s nice to have someone to help me.’

…When Keun Sejin’s birthday came around again, I should really send him a chicken. It was worth that much on my holiday.

‘Now, take the medicine and monitor again… ’

Ring.

I got a message on my smartphone.

[Seon Ahyeon: Are you enjoying your vacation, Moondae? I’ve just finished my first consultation. They seem to be a good person, so I’m going to try really hard this time. I thought I should call you to say thank you, so I texted you… (View more)]

“…”

This… He hadn’t changed. Still, I wondered why he didn’t post it in the group chat.

I clicked to view more.

To sum up, what he was saying was thank you and do you have any thoughts of visiting during the vacation?

‘None.’

I replied with, ‘Congratulations on receiving good counseling. I’m not feeling well, so I’m going to rest’.

Then, I threw my phone on the sofa and took medicine, and when I came back, the long text messages had multiplied to 5.

In addition, a lot of complicated notifications popped up in the group chat.

When I checked, it seemed Keun Sejin had already talked about everything that had happened today in the group chat.

[Cha Eugene: Be healthy, hyung! (default crying emoticon)]

[Ryu Chungwoo: I guess it happened because you took a break from work. Call me if it’s too hard.]

[Raebin: My grandfather gave me red ginseng. Should I bring it with me when I return to the dorm? (a blurred photo of a bucket)]

[Keun Sejin: please give some me too (laughing emoticon)]

…There were dozens of conversations like this.

“…Huh.”

At this point, instead of being alone, I felt like these guys were in the next room somewhere.

‘But I’m thankful.’

I was taking a break so they knew not to bother me with troublesome calls.

Even Lee Sejin sent me a message.

Of course, it wasn’t in the group chat.

[Lee Sejin A: Are you okay?]

I replied one by one in the order that came first.

First of all, I sent a message to Seon Ahyeon, saying, ‘I am getting better and I never thought you were tactlessly inviting me to play, so don’t worry’, and I also sent one to Lee Sejin saying that I was fine.

Lastly, I posted the same content on the group chat.

[I’ve gotten better after coming back from the hospital. Have a nice vacation, everyone.]

Then the screen was filled with OK emoticons from the people who checked. Well… The feedback was quick and positive, so it was nice.

‘Let’s just eat now.’

I shrugged and heated up the galbi-jjim and instant rice.

The galbi-jjim was quite delicious.

* * *

While Park Moondae was recovering and quietly finishing his vacation, Testar’s fans were enjoying the news of Testar’s vacation posted on SNS.

– Ahyeon He’s starting to use sponges, cute… It’s so cute…! (photo of a half-used sponge)

– Today’s Raebin: I eat chodang corn with my grandfather… I want to sit under the air conditioner and eat mysterious peaches and chodang corn until my stomach is full.

– Does anyone know where Cheongwoo took the picture and uploaded it? It looks like a mountain, but did you climb a mountain this summer, Chungwoo…? During a vacation at that…?

In particular, Keun Sejin was overflowing with birthday content, releasing all kinds of photos and videos.

The most popular content was a short video of Testar lip-syncing to the sound of their Hi-five music broadcast performance coming from the TV.

Testar, who was passing by the living room doing everyday activities such as drinking water or reading a book, got excited and followed others people's parts; it became a hot topic and got 10,000 shares.

– No, why do you look closer here than in the reality show

– I didn't know that actor Sejin would really play along… In Cha Eugene's rap part too…

– It feels like they've gotten a lot more comfortable with each other, so I feel warm… Sniff… Make sure Testar lasts longer… for 100 years…

And as the last episode of the reality trip was aired, fans were feeling a bittersweet aftertaste of Testar's successful debut activity.

However, it was still too early for fans of one member to enjoy the aftertaste.

They were Park Moondae's fans who had the main broadcast of <Let's Get Close First> right around the corner.

– Today has finally come.

– Moondae Entertainment Overflowing portion

– What's this, I was so nervous that I couldn't sleep last night…

-When I saw the trailer, there was a ghost story about an escaped murderer. Thinking that Moondae got scared and followed his senior around, it was already cute and fun. I'm the winner today because I am spending my annual vacation watching the scene with a clear mind

└ No, just how much were you looking forward to it

Amidst the fans' nervous expectations, this week's <Let's Get Close First> started airing.

The first thing that appeared… It was a skit about two people meeting in a mountain cabin in the middle of a snowy mountain.

[I was surprised by the sudden snowstorm, but it's fortunate there is a mountain cabin.]

[I see. I also quickly came in after seeing the weather.]

The problem was that neither of them had any talent for acting.

It suddenly became a good gag corner.

Laughter erupted at every community comment that ran the program on-air in real time.

–

– No, you're not in distress, you two look like you're having a business meeting

– Mysterious meeting room vibe

– When did the true leader Cheongryeo-nim leave and Jaehyun come out? Aigoo, Jaehyun, whoever sees it will think you guys are meeting at a seminar

– Moondae, the setting is winter. You were trying to take off your padded jacket because it was too hot, but you hesitated

The scene of sharing hot Americano and sharing the instant food awkwardly taken out of the backpack also made people laugh.

– Moondae pretended not to see the chicken feet lunch box just now

– No, according to the setting, the puppy brought it with him, but he's looking through his backpack like it's his first time seeing it!

– Cheongryeo, even in the middle of summer, you only drink hot water, so even for your junior, you're boiling Americano this summer… (speechless)

– I guess the lunch box doesn't taste good. They both became silent after eating

The vague snowstorm CG in the window made the sense of dissonance funnier.

[At that moment,]

[There is a sudden roar…?]

In addition, when these captions were added, the atmosphere became more strange.

[[A tremendous roar echoes through the cabin]

[Victim 1: Is it thunder? (Calm)]

[Junior 2: I'll call the police for now (Calm)]

– They're isolated in a mountain cabin due to a landslide, but I don't feel any tension. It's because they have a PPL product that produces infinitely hot Americano.

└ It’s driving me crazy.

– You two are really no different

└They must be thinking that they’re totally immersed in it… maybe…

It was when Cheongryeo brought up the ghost story that this endless cycle of skits was cut off.

- 1. Galbi-jjim = braised short ribs.

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CHAPTER 97

Cheongryeo on the screen smiled and began to unravel the ghost story.

[Do you know an idol ghost story? I also just heard of this recently.]

[…A ghost story?]

– It’s here.

– Finally

– Park Moondae, are you going to throw away the Americano this time?

In order not to go against people’s expectations, Park Moondae stiffened as soon as he heard the introduction of the ‘ghost story’.

– Moondae, are you scared of the ghost story?

– His face is all hardened but it’s so cute how he’s pretending that he’s not

– I’m not even a fan, but for some reason, it’s so fun to see him being scared…

└Welcome to Park Moondae’s bulletin board

In reality, he was nervous because of the meaningful content, but on the broadcast, he looked stiffened because of the ghost story.

[They wandered around the recording studio, and when an idol who was likely to succeed was recording, they interrupted and recorded together.]

[I could have done this…]

[…They said.]

The ghost's line in the middle was treated with red captions to liven up the atmosphere.

[Silence descends inside the mountain cabin]

And finally, a slightly chilly atmosphere was created.

– Huh?

– Hey, Park Mundae is immersed

– They finally manage to escape the skit

– Cheongryeo-nim, nice shot

[You don't have to worry. Actually, I just made it up. I modified the story of the ghost in the recording studio.]

[…Um, I see.]

[But you know that the story of the ghost in the recording studio is real, right?]

[!!]

– It's actually a phone ghost story

– But the phone ghost story is also a phone phone ghost story.

– It's rare for Cheongryeo to play pranks… Since he's with his hubae, a new personality comes out, It's fun

– Ah, the gap between the gag and immersion is just right

Since then, the broadcast began to create a proper atmosphere.

[The stove is broken.]

[The door in the back room seems to be locked.]

Slowly, the feeling of isolation heightened.

In the serious atmosphere, Cheongryeo and Park Moondae sat face to face in the living room and began a deep conversation.

[Um… Sunbae-nim, is it okay if I ask for advice?]

The rookie that recently became the hottest topic mentioned the process of the formation and the teamwork until his debut.

[It’s my first time talking about it in a place like this, so I didn’t know how it was.]

Also, the picture of a senior who sincerely responded to the words of a junior while being shy, saying that he had never talked about it before was quite good.

Regardless of the truth, in the strange format where strangers seemed to reveal their innermost thoughts in unusual situations, there was some touching impression that the prime-time entertainment aimed for.

– It’s a bit cheesy, but I like it

-I think idols are working hard from a young age.

– I hope all K-pop idols cheer up Ah, of course, except for the bastards who appear on general news

– Leader-nim, I guess you got hungry while talking. He’s eating snacks

– The only impressions I had of Moondae were from the first evaluation of Idol Inc. But it was unexpected and nice because he worded it nicely.

The broadcast seemed to end warmly like that, but then a small content was thrown and connected to the next week.

[-Next episode-]

[I think the radio is working…?]

[Bzzt- Breaking news. A felon suspect has escaped from a prison near the mountain…]

[-!]

– Oooh

– It’s serious

– Do the two of them escape the cabin? Or defense?

People were interested because they knew that it wouldn’t be too serious due to the nature of the program and that it would end with a gag at a critical moment.

And next week.

The majority of the viewers were shocked.

– What’s this how could this be

- whut

– How can it be connected like this?

At first, it seemed to be going as viewers expected.

At the beginning of the broadcast, Cheongryeo and Park Moondae spent a relaxing time waiting for the police.

But soon, strangely enough, they realized that the cell phone battery had run out, and they went around the mountain cabin looking for something to send an SOS signal out of the window.

But instead of flashlights or flares, they found a radio.

[Shall we listen to this first? It seems to be working.]

[Bzzt…]

And they heard a broadcast saying that a murder suspect had escaped from prison.

The moment both of them stiffened at the sudden news.

[Thump thump!]

[!!!!]

Someone started knocking on the door.

And a dull voice was heard over the door.

[It’s the police! Please open the door!]

[…]

Due to the timing, of course, it was a development in which the escaped murder suspect was lying.

[The two people exchange glances]

– Heol, it’s more nerve-wracking than I thought

– Guys, you’re all smart. Let’s not open the door carelessly

– Bring back last week’s meeting room vibe!

Fortunately, the two just approached the door cautiously.

And Park Moondae opened his mouth first.

[Please tell us your position, name, and affiliation.]

[…]

Suddenly there was silence outside the door.

And after a while

[Thump thump!]

[Hey, open the door!]

[!!!!]

– I’m scared

– It’s like an all-genre variety show

– Have they ever done it on full-scale like this before?

Viewers were a little taken aback. And then something even more surprising happened.

[Crack!]

The front door was split.

[????]

A huge question mark caption bomb appeared for a while.

[Escape at once]

Before the door could be completely broken down, the two hurriedly started running.

– Heol

– It’s more serious than I thought;

– Wasn’t this program supposed to only show skits? Why is it suddenly so scary?

The comments gradually went beyond bewilderment and began to express anxiety or bitterness, but that didn’t last long either.

It was because those two suddenly broke the window and escaped.

[This way!]

[Yes!]

The green screen attached to the window was torn apart, and the CG began to get confused.

The caption was also confused.

[Th-this…?]

[A situation where there is nothing to see]

Meanwhile, the two were holding the window frame while one of them moved the lock. They were very much in sync.

The people burst out laughing.

– Aren’t you both too immersed

– Where are the businessmen from last week?

– Guys, is it okay to break the 4th wall like that on a broadcast?

┗ Destruction of the 4th wall (physics)

┗

After the two ran out, the camera rushed in and caught the two who came out.

Low-cost CGs appeared in a hurry to cover filming equipment.

[The snow has melted.]

[Thanks to the warmer weather… It seems they can take off their coat]

[But it’s still pretty cold.]

– These people… They’re pretty shameless…

– The snow has melted because the weather is warm Crazy

– I was wondering what kind of snow picture it is, but the staff and the filming equipment are roughly combined using CG

– Meanwhile, Moondae secretly tried to take off his padded jacket, but Cheongryeo stopped him

┗I guess he can’t because the immersion isn’t broken up to that point

┗No, I can’t understand the criteria…!

Contrary to the boisterous reaction of the viewers, the two continued to talk casually.

[Let’s hurry up and go down before that strange person catches on and chases after us.]

[Yes. See you next time.]

[…You’re not going to go down with me?]

[In case of emergency, it would be better for at least one person to live. Why don’t we split up?]

[Um, that’s true. I’ll see you next time.]

[Yes. Have a safe trip home, sunbae-nim]

–

– Otherworldly wisdom

– That’s so cool. I guess this is winter

– Is it okay for this conversation to flow like this

– I am not a fan, I just knew that both of them got the same answer on the idol personality test… I didn’t know it would be this much…

ㄴ

While viewers burst into laughter, Cheongryeo and Park Moondae politely exchanged greetings and parted ways.

The camera briefly focused on Cheongryeo going down the mountain, then it turned around and followed Park Moondae. Park Moondae glanced at Cheongryeo who was going down and he turned around.

Then, he headed to the front door of the mountain cabin that he had just escaped from.

– ???

– What’s this

– Why are you there

Standing in front of the entrance, Park Moondae took off his coat. Inside the long padding, the clothes he was wearing were revealed.

He was dressed in a red prison uniform.

[!!!!]

Park Moondae murmured dryly.

[Ah, sunbae-nim, you are lucky.]

People who realized the situation started to scream.

-?????

– crazy crazy what is this

– Aaaaaaaa

– Heol, prison uniform

– I think I’m going crazy

– Is Moondae the runaway ninja that appeared on the radio? Aargh

Park Moondae whistled and entered the front door. Surprised exclamations were briefly inserted into the scene.

And the cut was switched.

This time it was Cheongryeo going down the mountain.

– Run away

– Cheongyeo-nim, hurry up and run

– It’s a thriller drama all of a sudden. Why are you doing this, MBS

However, Cheongryeo stopped his slow steps.

And murmured.

[I couldn’t take him this time either…]

-??

– What is he

Cheongryeo sighed and started walking again. When a huge tree brushed by, there was a gap in the camera’s view for a moment.

Cheongryeo had disappeared.

And a flyer was zoomed in next to the tree where he disappeared.

[Looking for a missing person]

[Went missing during a landslide caused by heavy snowfall]

On that list… Cheongryeo’s photo was printed.

– Aaaaaaaah

– Is he a ghost?

– Oh, my God. What the hell is this?

– Oh my God

A tense BGM exploded.

[When we meet again, then…]

With that caption, the broadcast ended.

– Oh, my God

– What did I just see?

Because the development was so dramatic, people were more shocked rather than scared

– I want to have adlibs with unexpected twists, but I feel like this isn't satisfactory

– How could you think of doing something like that with those two bad actors, MBS?

– Hiiik It's not that they're bad at acting, but it's a format where they're pretending they're bad at it!

└? What are you talking about?

└If they're a ghost and an escaped convict, both of them are not in distress, that's why they were calm when they met last week, right?

└Heol

People were puzzled by the complete big picture but soon began to enjoy it.

Because thinking back on it, it was funny.

– Everything is complete with the last skit

– It fit just like this

– Suddenly, it became the production team’s big picture

– Ah This is so fun, I have to rehash last week’s

Although it was dramatic, people tolerated it because they were definitely immersed and had fun.

In addition, it was easy to push public opinion because both of them had such a big fandom.

– Today’s <Let’s Get Close First> was really fun~ I want to see VTIC Cheongryeo more often on variety shows^^ Testar Moondae fighting!

– Even though it was Park Moondae’s first time doing a solo variety show, I think he did a good job. His chemistry with Cheongryeo sunbae-nim was good, too. Recommended!

– Both Cheongryeo and Park Moondae were excellent casts. I hope you invite them again next time. (default smile emoticon)

Because entertainment articles didn’t have comment sections, the viewer’s bulletin board was booming.

Since the unconventional and funny format was well received by general viewers who didn’t know Cheongryeo or Park Moondae, the fans laughed and enjoyed the variety show’s content without much worry.

And a few days later.

A new content popped up again.

[This is Testar’s Moondae (puppy emoticon) It’s a W live]

It was Park Moondae’s first solo W-live.

The Novel will be updated first on this website. Come back and continue reading tomorrow, everyone!

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